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The Moncada Silk Museum, the case of the Garín factory

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Silk weavers since the eighteenth century, the *Garín* family opened their factory in the early nineteenth century. Since then, successive owners kept records of their production, conserving both fabric samples and written documentation, and the resulting collection of some seven thousand items is now administered by the Moncada Silk Museum. The collection is an almost entirely untapped resource, having been unavailable to experts until only recently, but new research will shed light on textile design and changing tastes from the eighteenth century onwards, revitalising heritage that is central to the study and public knowledge of silk production in our culture.

From factory to museum

In 2013 the *Garín* factory underwent a profound transformation. After 200 years of industrial activity it was converted into a museum, creating a living installation that continues to produce hand-crafted fabrics alongside a collection of exhibits that include systematically compiled production records. The museum marks a departure from the traditional static exhibit model, fusing past and present in a more active approach to heritage conservation. It provides a multidisciplinary cultural space for research, education and interpretation, as well as for a variety of creative pursuits.

In the textile sector, the most immediate threat in times of crisis is the loss of historical fabrics, which many companies are forced to sell off to balance their accounts.[1] *Garín*, however, understood the wider value of its fabrics and put in place specific measures to conserve them, going to considerable lengths to preserve its textile collection alongside the original documentation that accompanied each piece.[2] Since its unveiling, the Moncada Silk Museum has kept the *Garín* collection together, preventing a gradual dispersal of the heritage generated by this emblematic Valencian silk manufacturer and creating the best possible conditions for its ongoing

1 CARBONELL BASTÉ, Silvia, "Los inicios del coleccionismo textil en Cataluña", in *Datatextil*, no. 21, Terrassa 2009, pp. 4-7. ROCA CABRERA, María, "El coleccionismo textil y la pintura del siglo XIX", in *Memoria y Significado. Uso y recepción de los vestigios del pasado*, Universitat de València, Valencia, 2013, pp. 187-197. ROSINA, M. Collecting Textiles. Patrons Collection Museums. Turin, Allemandi & C., 2013, pp. 33-43. Over the years we have seen how the dismantling of collections through public and private sales has led to a significant loss of information and, most importantly, damaged the overall understanding of what the silk industry represents in our past.

2 Company archives lose their *raison d'être* if the fabric samples are separated from the accompanying documents, designs or other written information.

Commercial label for the factory *Hermanos Garín e hijos* (1877-1889). Silk Museum archive (AMS).

preservation and availability to a wider public.[3] The project behind the Moncada Silk Museum must be viewed in the long term, with a series of specific activity milestones.

Priority in the initial stages has been given to cataloguing the collection. Arrangements for public exhibition will be made at a later stage, once the museum has received the official designation of 'museographic collection', as governed by Article 69 of Law 5/2007, which regulates the recognition of cultural heritage states in Valencia.

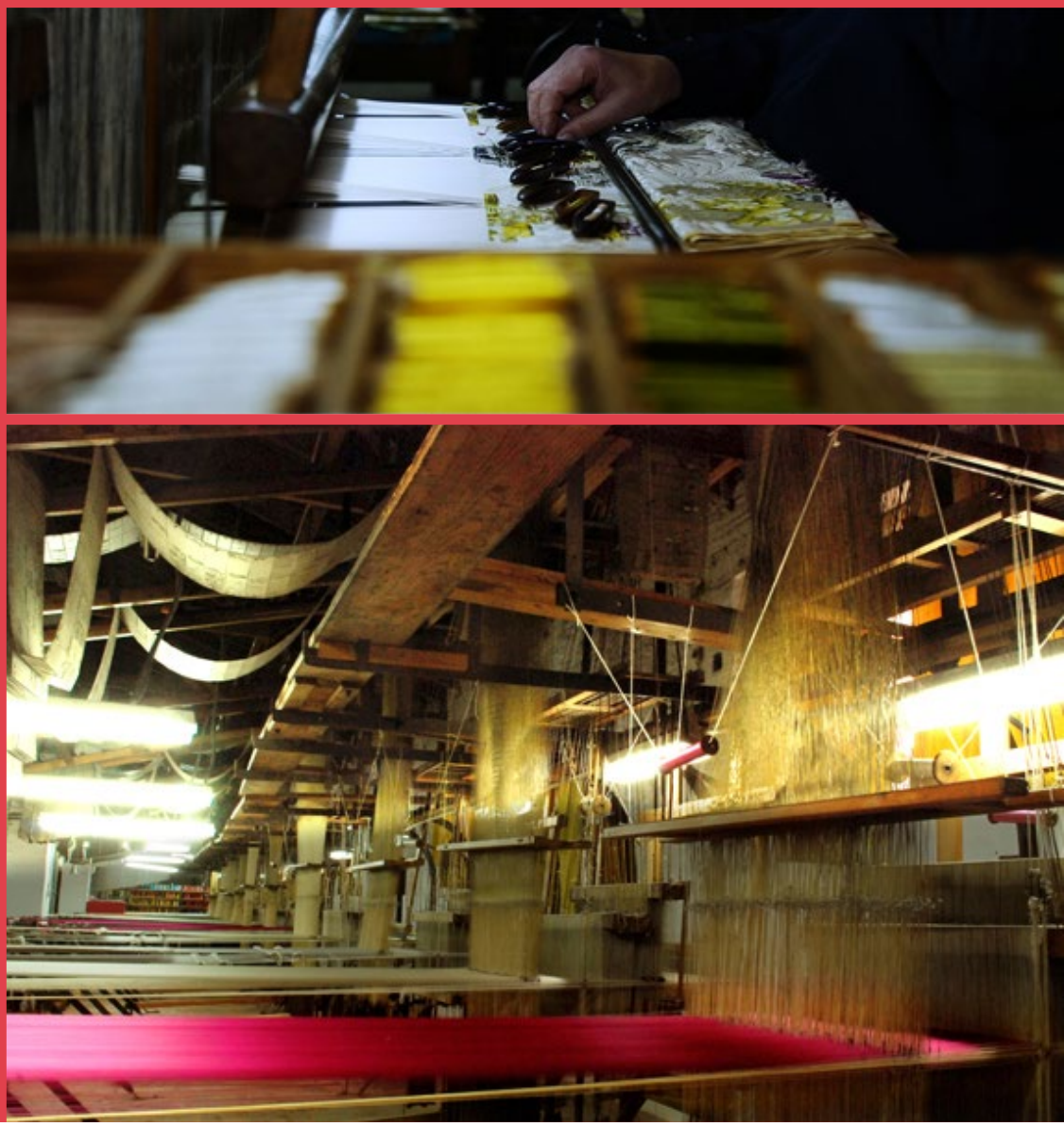
The original materials conserved from the *Garín* factory make up a rich and varied collection of exhibits dating from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, including 805 original designs, 1056 cutting plans, 200 punch cards, more than 4000 historical fabric samples, twenty items of ecclesiastical attire, a historical archive with a range of visual materials, a library collection (publications from the nineteenth century, historical reviews, technical manuals and exhibition or sample catalogues), specific documentation (production records, copies of notarial records, invoices, ledgers, salary sheets, cost projections, supplier orders, colour charts) and industrial equipment. The museum still houses eleven original looms, warpers and card punchers that not only shape the discourse of the historical exhibition but also anchor the unique relationship between museum and working factory.

The singularity of this new heritage installation has enabled its curators to pursue projects on a scale that would be unfeasible for a conventional textile museum. Since the underlying concept is that of a "living museum", where visitors will be able to see fabrics being weaved using traditional methods, the guiding philosophy will be public participation in the organisation of cultural activities and knowledge dissemination, for experts and the general public.

A comprehensive inventory has been produced and digitised to create a database combining detailed images and textual descriptions.[4] Each individual

3 The fabrics and drawings have suffered the characteristic deterioration caused by regular handling, changes of location, building work at the company, and a series of disastrous events such as the 1948 flood or the 1986 fire, which damaged or destroyed much of the documentation.

4 In 1997, the collection of drawings and fabrics was ordered and classified by Mª Victoria Vicente Conesa at the request of *Garín*. The digital inventories covering the final two decades of the twentieth century are obsolete and only those compiled from 2000 onwards can now be accessed.



Handlooms, nineteenth century.
Moncada Silk Museum.
Photography: Trellat Media.

file describes the features of the exhibit and its links to other pieces in the collection, enabling researchers to browse through relevant selections quickly and accurately. Current projects at the Moncada Silk Museum include the creation of a searchable online archive of the same material. By creating a collection that can be consulted digitally, the team has minimised the need to handle fragile textile and paper items, greatly reducing the risk of deterioration and damage.

The collection as it stands today was not intended as a museum piece; rather, it grew naturally from the creation of new products, with a strictly commercial aim. It is only with the passing of time that the documents and fabric samples have acquired historical value. Scientific study is in itself a means of safeguarding the future of this unique industrial heritage; private collections are notoriously restricted, to prevent designs being copied, but the transformation of the *Garín* factory into the Moncada Silk Museum has created an accessible set of archives, providing detailed information that assists researchers in their task and bolsters the collection's historical and market value.

Cutting plan for the design *Hortensia*, 1910s. AMS.

Creative process

The collection contains a rich variety of items from each stage in the design and manufacturing of a traditional fabric, from the original sketch through to the final finishing techniques. The designs themselves are dominated by plant and mythological motifs, which illustrate the evolution of tastes and market trends over the years. The popularisation of history over the course of the nineteenth century was reflected in the extensive use of *revival* motifs in the applied arts. Fabrics from this era, which were used mainly to make ecclesiastical garments, bear religious iconography, plant themes related to the Eucharist — such as wheat, grapes and roses — and floral motifs in the French style. The twentieth century brought the stylised forms of *Art Nouveau* and avant-garde abstraction to textile design, and the number of orders from the Church fell as demand from the conventional clothing and upholstery markets grew.[5]

The original paper designs represent the first step in the creative process, as seen in the sketches conserved at the museum, which date from the second half of the nineteenth century onwards. Once a design had been selected, the sketch had to be made suitable for weaving, which was done by translating it into a cutting plan, or *raqueta*. The cutting plan was set out on squared paper in such a way that it could be correctly interpreted by the loom, although every effort was made to respect the skill and the lines of the designer. Each

5 From the study of the *libro de encargos* (order book) for 1889, held in the Moncada Silk Museum archive, we see that 90% of orders were for ecclesiastical use.

Punch cards, complete with original labels, for Jacquard handlooms. Nineteenth century. AMS.

column of squares corresponded to a warp thread, and each row represented a passage of the weft. The colours of the cutting plan indicated different stitch patterns, and the back of the paper often contained notes about the fabric type or equivalences to be consulted by the weaver. Both the original sketches and cutting plans often bore the date and the name and properties of the fabric, making them valuable resources for establishing the approximate dates of older designs. Additionally, the reverse of the cutting plan generally bore the name of the printing firm.

The next step was to create the punch cards. To produce the desired pattern or design, a Jacquard loom follows instructions provided in the form of cards punched with a series of precisely positioned holes, which are interpreted by the skilled hand of the master weaver to create richly patterned fabrics such as silk brocades and damask.

Garín designs

Work to catalogue the collection, together with painstaking study of the documentation in the *Garín* archive, has helped to establish the origins of famous *Garín* designs like *Carpio*, *Francia*, *Nuncio* and *Rica*. Researchers first examined the sketches and cutting plans.[6] This information was then cross-referenced against written sources in the document archive, which also served to identify the type of clients, the trends at the time — colourful fabrics and extensive use of decorative motifs — and changes in price.[7]

6 Some, such as *Rica* or *Nuncio*, display the date of the original design, which may be the date on which the drawing was commissioned or a later addition. We have followed the evidence of ink or pencil notes, and in the case of the squared paper used for the cutting plans, the name of the engraver or printer.

7 Production records, order books and manuals from the Moncada Silk Museum archives.

Sketch for Jacquard fabric with zoomorphic motifs. AMS.

Sketch of the design *San Lucas*, second half of the nineteenth century. AMS.

Francia, brocade, early twentieth century. AMS.

Carpio and *Francia* are two of the oldest *Garín* designs. Although the cutting plans, printed by "Monneret et Dusserre a Lyon" in 1839,[8] are undated, we can trace the designs to the mid-nineteenth century. The documentation contains written notes about the designs: in 1850, the "*Espolín Leon de Francia*" is referred to in the "Report on what I present at the exhibition of the year" and from 1852 we find "Carpio design cost 20 reales".[9] As we can see from the cutting plans, the *Carpio* and *Francia* designs were also called *Carpiet* and *Francieta*. Although the base drawing is the same, two versions were weaved, varying in the number of colours used for the flowers; the former were richer in colour and retailed at a higher price, and the latter denominations *Carpiet* and *Francieta* eventually disappeared from use.[10]

The *Rica* design can also be traced to around the mid-nineteenth century, perhaps even earlier. There are three surviving cutting plans, only one of which is dated, showing the year 1910,[11] but the appearance suggests that it is the most recent of the three. Additionally, of the other two designs, the *Rica Seber*, is drawn on squared paper printed by *José Coromina, Plazuela dels Peixos casa nº 10*, who taught the engraving course at the *Escola de la Llotja* in Barcelona (1814-1820)[12] and died in 1834, while still the school's assistant director. Documentation produced prior to 1850 contains notes referring to "*Espolín la Rica*".

Montserrat, *La impremta catalana i els seus protagonistes a l'inici de la societat liberal (1800-1833).* Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Barcelona, 2009, pp. 377.

8 Charles Monneret and Jules Duserre are described as "marchands de gravures" in: MOUGIN-RUSAND, P., *Annuaire administratif et commercial de Lyon et du département du Rhône*, Lyon, 1839.

9 Manual (1846-1851), p. 24, part II and p. 32, part III.

10 Oral testimony: information provided by Rafael Martínez Soucase, a second-generation manager and weaver at *Garín*, since 1944.

11 In some cases new cutting plans were ordered to introduce changes to previous designs.

12 VERNEDA RIBERA, Meritxell, *L'Art gràfic a Barcelona. El llibre il.lustrat 1800-1843*, Doctoral thesis, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Barcelona, 2012, p. 71. In this thesis the workshop of José Coromina is described as being located in Call del Governador in 1800. An earlier study indicated that the two addresses are in fact the same: COMAS I GÜELL,

Rica, brocade, CDMT, Terrassa, 386. See detail.

Two cutting plans are conserved of the *Nuncio* design, and although only one is dated (bearing the year 1904) the other is known to be earlier. The design was commissioned by the Papal nuncio to Madrid, Monseñor Antonio Rinaldi, Archbishop of Heràclea, for the *Te Deum* at the swearing of the constitution of King Alfonso XIII in May 1902. The design is assumed to have been created specifically for this occasion, as it is not recorded in either technical documentation or order lists from the nineteenth century.

Conclusions

The transformation of the *Garín* silk factory into the Moncada Silk Museum has converted its archives into an invaluable source of reference material for researchers. The collection, which comprises documents, an image archive and a textile library, is a fundamental resource for studying the earliest *Garín* fabrics, many of which are conserved at different institutions.[13] The new museum will harness the value of the company's artistic and cultural heritage, prioritising its long-term conservation to aid ongoing research into textile production and support efforts to prevent the fragmentation of collections like it.

As well as a cultural heritage site, the museum is also a working industrial facility, creating a dual function that gives back to society. Through a collaboration with the companies *Garín* and *Gironés-Vila*, the museum has reproduced and reissued the design *San Ildefonso* using the original nineteenth-century machinery and techniques. The process was guided by the documentation held in the museum's historical archive, which provided the information needed to create the cutting plan and punch cards and to weave the final design according to the traditional method, taking inspiration from fragments of historical woven fabrics. ●

13 CDMT, Terrassa. Madrid: Museo del Traje, Museo Sorolla, Museo del Romanticismo, Museo Nacional de Artes Decorativas, Museo del Prado. Valencia: Casa Museo Benlliure, Real Colegio del Corpus Christi de Valencia, Museo de Bellas Artes de Valencia, Museo Nacional de Cerámica y Artes Suntuarias González Martí, Museo Sacro de El Tesoro de la Concepción de la Orotava.

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Artistic fabrics, unique portraits (II)
The School of Industrial Arts and Crafts, Sabadell

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Photographs: Historical Archive of Sabadell (AHS) and Quico Ortega, Textile Museum and Documentation Centre (CDMT)

The School of Arts and Crafts in Sabadell was responsible for the creation of more commemorative portraits in woven fabrics than any other producer in Catalonia, thanks to its successful adaptation of the Jacquard loom system. The School was founded in 1902, directed by Narcís Giralt i Sallarès (1846-1925)[1] with the assistance of the painter Joan Vila Cinca (1856-1938). From the moment teaching began, specific provision was made for artistic concerns as part of its range of textile courses. As a joint venture between the Sabadell City Council, the city's Academy of Fine Arts, the Union of Manufacturers of Sabadell and the Caixa d'Estalvis de Sabadell savings bank, the new school took up the legacy of several similar institutions that had been founded in the latter half of the nineteenth century, as industrial expansion raised demand for skilled workers, particularly in the textile sector.[2]

Courses in textile theory and techniques were not new to Sabadell or indeed to Catalonia.[3] Prior to the opening of the specialist schools in the late-nineteenth century, training was provided by the *Institut Industrial* (Institute of Industry, 1863-1872) and later by the *Escola Industrial i Mercantil* (School of Industry and Commerce, 1873-1874), the *Col·legi Sant Josep* (1876-1902) and the *Ateneu de Sabadell* (1880-1902).[4] The specialist textile schools suffered numerous setbacks due to the volatile political climate of the time, until in 1902 the new School of Arts and Crafts was opened, originally in a building on Carrer Sant Antoni leased by the Caixa d'Estalvis de Sabadell, where the first classes were taught. The first director, Narcís Giralt, was the School's keenest proponent of textile portraits, and also taught classes in textile theory and techniques. In the first academic year, 1902-1903, the School had 163 students, and the original premises soon fell short of the required capacity. This problem was overcome by commissioning new premises, designed by Jeroni Martorell i Terrats (1876-1951), who planned and oversaw the construction of a *modernista* building to house the School, which was carried out between the years 1908 and 1910. Classes would be taught there until the end of the 1960s, and the building is now the headquarters of the Espai Cultura Fundació Sabadell 1859, at Carrer d'en Font, 2.

1 Narcís Giralt was the School's director until 1925.
2 On the history of the schools, see: POMÉS MARTORELL, Francesc. *Cent anys d'escola: Escola Industrial d'Arts i Oficis de Sabadell 1902-2002*. School of Arts and Crafts, Sabadell, 2003.
3 In Barcelona, for example, we know that in 1881 this subject was offered at the *Institut del Foment del Treball Nacional*, at Carrer del Pi, 5, with teachers including Francesc Duran i Brujas, who also taught classes at the *Ateneu* in Sabadell.
4 Narcís Giralt taught classes in textile theory and practice at the *Ateneu*. In 1890 the new subject Textile Technology was introduced, followed in 1898 by Applied Drawing for textile design.

Façade of the School of Arts and Crafts. Sabadell, ca 1928. Photograph: Francesc Casañas Riera / AHS. FCR03100.

Building on its positive beginnings, the School added drawing to its specialist textile curriculum, which combined elements of textile theory and the art of weaving. Influenced by the Academy of Fine Arts, but also by the broader cultural movement of *Modernisme*, the School recognised the importance of incorporating elements of artistic theory into the textile design process. Joan Vila Cinca and Joan Vilatobà Fígols (1878-1954) spearheaded this new artistic approach, which dovetailed perfectly with the management philosophy of Narcís Giralt, who had acquired years of experience in the field of textile theory and techniques. As a result, the School's first official regulations, which listed the professions for which tuition was provided, made specific reference to textile design, alongside the more traditional technical disciplines.

It was through the combined influence of artists and textile theorists that the School came to take an interest in the Jacquard system, which it used to weave the first silk portraits of important figures of the era; these new pieces exemplified the harmony between art and craft, between artist and technician. The fabrics, specifically referred to as "artistic", were created by students under the guidance of Narcís Giralt; some were produced as course-end projects, others as commemorative gifts to mark special occasions and anniversaries. Upon Giralt's death, his academic duties were taken over by his former student Lluís Mas i Gomis (1890-1971), a professor of textile theory and draughtsmanship. Mas, in turn, was replaced by Jordi Marmiñà i Valls (1931), who was also a former student of the School and had helped to create the punch cards and weave some of the designs.

Meeting room, showing the cutting plans on squared paper that were used to weave Tiepolo's Immaculate Conception, Our Lady of the Pillar and the portraits of His Holiness Pope Pius X and Dr Zamenhof. School of Arts and Crafts. Sabadell, ca 1930. Photograph: Francesc Casañas Riera/AHS. FCR01776.

Textile theory classroom at the School of Arts and Crafts of Sabadell, with the portrait of Niceto Alcalà Zamora in the background. Sabadell, ca 1930. Photograph: Francesc Casañas Riera/AHS. FCR01777.

Our Lady of the Pillar. Silk. 1908.
24 x 11.5 cm. MHS 1727, 10555.

The Jacquard-weave works of art began life as demonstrations of the School's theoretical tuition and general artistic programme, but they also came to follow the fashions that emanated from Lyon in the latter part of the nineteenth century, and would eventually become one of the School's defining traditions. Produced mainly in silk, they reached levels of technical perfection thanks to the introduction of the Jacquard system. Textile portraits require a high degree of technical skill, particularly in creating colour gradients and giving expressiveness to the eyes, where the greatest possible realism is sought. The detail is such that these weaves bear a closer resemblance to engravings and photographs[5] than to industrial textiles. From the earliest pieces, the artistic Jacquard fabrics created in Sabadell featured portraits of politicians and commemorative images of important figures in the textile sector, as well as a smaller number of religious images. The portraits were signed and produced in limited numbers, giving them a value comparable to works of art, and indeed most were framed and hung as paintings in offices and private homes.

Examples of this work are preserved by the Sabadell History Museum, the Union of Manufacturers of Sabadell, the *Agrupacions Professionals Narcís Giralt*, the CDMT and the Badalona Museum, representing the combined efforts of a wide network of specialist collectors, including industry heads, professors and students, and textile lovers in general.

The production of artistic fabrics in Sabadell can be broadly divided into two periods: 1908 to 1917, under the direction of Narcís Giralt; and 1929 to 1974, under the direction of Lluís Mas, Jordi Marmiñà Valls[6] and finally Josep Cusidó Muñoz.[7] After this period, commemorative Jacquards were still made, although in smaller numbers and by private commission, until 1986.

Some twenty silk fabrics were designed and weaved at the School of Arts and Crafts between 1908 and 1974 using a Vincenzi Jacquard loom donated by *Balsach*[8] for final-year student projects. The loom had a total capacity of 2,304 needles[9] — two machines with 1,152 needles each — and, though it eventually fell into disuse, was transferred to the Sabadell History Museum where it stands in testimony to the production of a unique type of technically complex weave.

To create a Jacquard portrait, a photograph of the original image was first needed. This was enlarged to the size of the squared paper on which the cutting plan was to be laid out, after which a sketch was applied directly to the paper and detailed shading applied. The next step was to mark the picks manually on the grid, representing the warp (vertical) and weft (horizontal) threads.[10] According to Cusidó, for a piece measuring approximately 31 x 40 cm, a cutting plan[11] of 150 x 180 cm was required. This would equate to around two million squares, which represent approximately one thousands hours of skilled work.[12]

5 The first pieces were produced in the period also known for the photographic portraits of Joan Vilatobà.

6 Jordi Marmiñà i Valls (Sabadell, 1931), an expert in textile theory trained at the School of Arts and Crafts of Sabadell and a former student of Lluís Mas.

7 Josep Cusidó i Muñoz (Sabadell, 1934), an expert in textile theory trained at the A. Forrellad Textile School, Cal Tatché and the School of Arts and Crafts of Sabadell. He graduated in Design from the Barcelona Textile Design School, founded and directed by Josep Llorens and Ramon Folch, and was a student of Lluís Mas.

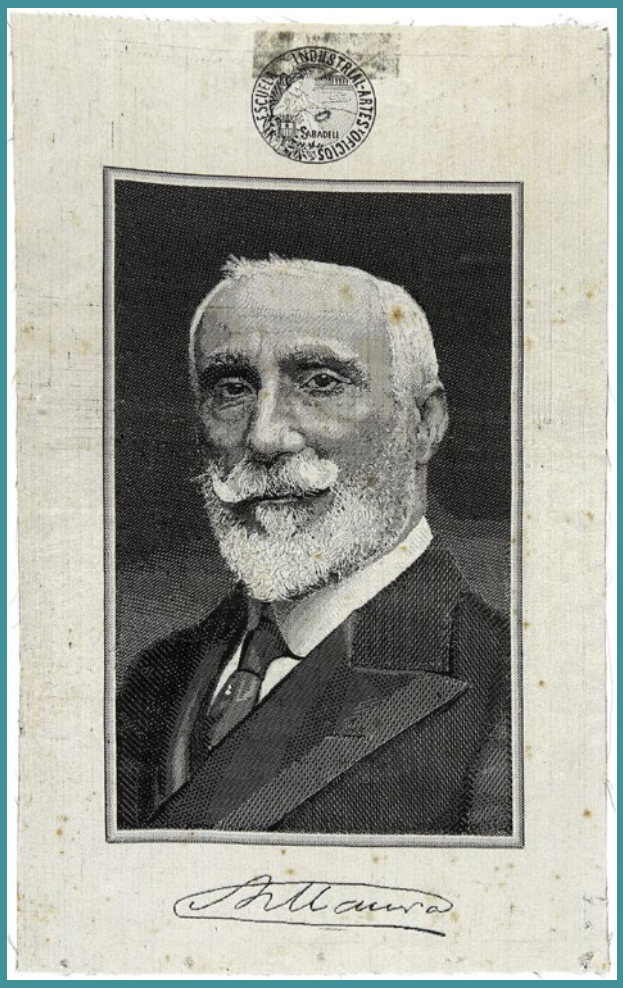
8 Built in Sabadell. *Gusi, Balsach i Cia* began to construct textile machinery and looms in 1897.

9 The capacity was greater thanks to the use of the Jacquard system, which was capable of producing higher weave densities. Some of the portraits, for example, had up to 110-120 threads per centimetre. Between 3,000 and 6,000 punch cards were generally used.

10 The vast majority of cutting plans from the early twentieth century that survive today were made on millimetre paper produced by *J. Tarascó*, Barcelona.

11 In Sabadell the cutting plan is usually referred to simply as the "card" or "drawing".

12 CUSIDÓ, Josep. "Un art poc conegut". *Quadern de les idees, les arts i les lletres*. February 2002, no. 134.

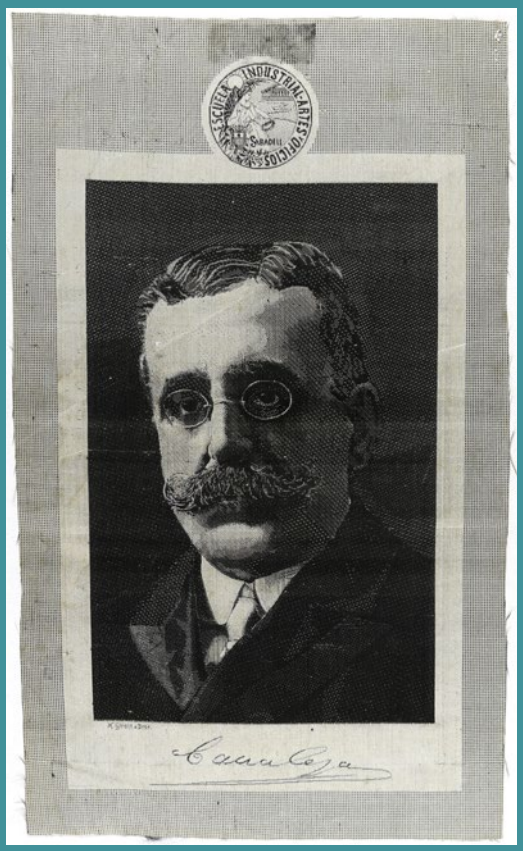


▲ Antoni Maura. Silk. 25 x 15 cm. Josep Cusidó Collection. MHS 1733. Photograph: David Gonzàlez Ruíz/AHS.

◀ Dr Zamenhof. Silk. 1909. 25.5 x 11 cm. MHS 1731. Photograph: David Gonzàlez Ruíz/AHS.

▼ Josep Canalejas. Silk. 1911. 26 x 16 cm. MHS 1735. Photograph: David Gonzàlez Ruíz/AHS.

▶ Pope Pius X. Silk. 1910. 25 x 11.5 cm. MHS 1729. Photograph: David Gonzàlez Ruíz/AHS.



The Immaculate Conception (Tiepolo). Silk. 1917. 36.5 x 20 cm. MHS 1725. Photograph: David Gonzàlez Ruíz/AHS.

Count of Romanones. Silk. 1917. 41.5 x 25 cm. MHS 1737. Photograph: David Gonzàlez Ruíz/ AHS.

Once complete, the plan was passed to the card puncher,[13] who interpreted the content of each square and transposed it to the cards that would guide the raising of the needles in the loom assembly and, in turn, the warp threads. When the full set of cards was ready, it was mounted above the loom and the weaving process could begin. Each card marks one pass of the weft, and for many of the silk Jacquards weaved in Sabadell more than six thousand cards were needed.

The first famous fabric to be weaved on the *Balsach* loom was the depiction of Our Lady of the Pillar, for the 1908 Hispano-French Exhibition in Zaragoza, at which the textile producers of Sabadell were represented.[14] The weave was directed by Narcís Giralt and was intended to showcase the School's technical and artistic prowess to a European audience. The fabric is marked only with the name of the Industrial School of Sabadell, but the lower part, below the figure, bears the initials *G* and *B*,[15] which could correspond to the name of the artist and weaver. The original cutting plan, which was kept at the School, was burned during the Civil War, but fortunately several finished weaves survive.[16]

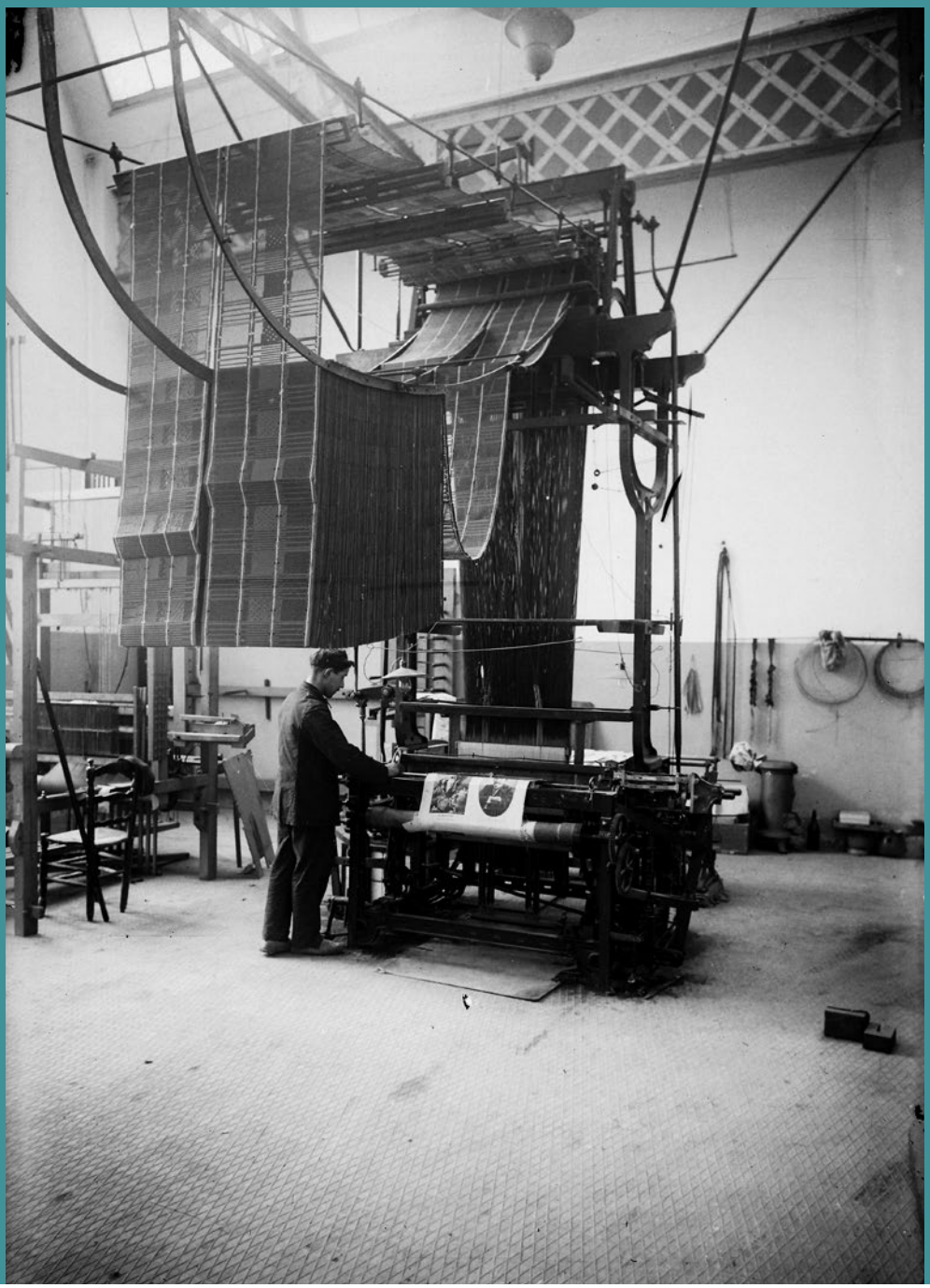
Using the same loom assembly, in the following years Narcís Giralt oversaw the technical and artistic direction of portraits of Antonio Maura (1909), Dr Ludwik Lejzer Zamenhof (1909), Pope Pius X (1910), José Canalejas (1911), Alfonso XIII of Spain (1915), the Count of Romanones (1916-1917) and Tiepolo's Immaculate Conception (1917). These portraits were weaved in silk, with one

13 In Catalunya, *Mas Lluch S.A.* has been one of the leading exponents of card punching since 1870, and is still active today. In Sabadell, punch cards were also produced by *Rodamilans*.

14 Joan Vila Cinca was artistic director of the Gremi, and took charge of the decoration of the exhibition space.

15 *Giralt i B*?

16 Sabadell History Museum no. 1727, and 10555, Badalona Museum (the book *Teixits Artístichs*, Pau Rodon Amigó Collection), and others in private collections.



Lluís Mas Gomis weaving silk on a Jacquard loom, with the images of Tiepolo's Immaculate Conception and Álvaro de Figueroa Torres (First Count of Romanones). Sabadell, 8 July 1917. Photograph: Francesc Casañas Riera/AHS. FCR00649.

or two warps — one white, or one white and one black — and two wefts — one white and one black — using the *sfumato* technique, which achieved perfect transitions between white and black across a range of grey tones.

While it is not clear which of the students were involved in the creation of these early pieces or how many hours were needed to produce the cutting plan and to weave the fabric, we know that the loom was used not only to practise applied drawing and textile weaving but also to create gifts for the subjects of the portraits, to mark a series of special occasions. One such example is the portrait of Dr Zamenhof, which was created for the Esperanto Congress in Barcelona in 1909, commissioned by a private enthusiast. The inscription reads: *INDUSTRIA LERNEJO, ESCUELA INDUSTRIAL, SABADELL (ESPAÑA).*[17] It

17 *Industria lernejo* means "school of industry" in Esperanto.

A.


B.

C.

A. Our Lady of Montserrat. Estamene.1929. 18 x 11 cm. MHS. 17969. Photograph: David Gonzàlez Ruíz/AHS.

B. The Young Girl (Ludwig von Zumbusch). Silk? 11.5 x 7 cm. MHS 17403. Photograph: David Gonzàlez Ruíz/AHS.

C. Gypsy woman. (Joan Vilatobà). Silk? 13 x 7 cm. Josep Cusidó Collection. Photograph: Quico Ortega/CDMT.

is unclear, however, whether it was ever presented to its subject. One piece that did reach its intended recipient was the portrait of Pope Pius X,[18] which Josep Gorina i Pujol presented during a trip to Rome.[19]

All of portraits displayed the signature of the subject and identified the producer: the School of Arts and Crafts of Sabadell. It was not until the portrait of Canalejas, however, in 1911, that Narcís Giralt chose to include his own name. Thereafter, each of the artistic Jacquards produced between 1911 and 1917 under the direction of Giralt bore his signature,[20] and the portrait of Canalejas and Alfonso XIII also made reference to his role as the School's director.

Of the various pieces, the most widely acclaimed at the time was the portrait of Alfonso XIII of Spain. Camil Rodon[21] lavished it with praise:

> *Thanks to Sr Giralt (…) it stands above, in many ways — both for the excellence of the composition and for the adequate proportions of the design and the perfect resemblance to the monarch — other textiles produced in our country. (…) To the purity of the drawing, to a rich imagination, our artists must add the detailed study of the technical and — to put it one way — material aspects of their art. (…) We believe in all sincerity that both Sr Giralt and the School of Industry of Sabadell can allow themselves to feel very satisfied (…) for having produced, with the woven portrait of Alfonso XIII, one of the highest manifestations of applied drawing for textile design in the industrial arts.*[22]

18 Using the *sfumato* technique, with a single white silk warp, density 110-120 threads, two wefts, also silk, one white and one black, and a density of 66 threads per centimetre.

19 POMÉS MARTORELL, Francesc (2003).

20 Canalejas, Alfonso XIII, Count of Romanones, Tiepolo's Immaculate Conception.

21 Pau Rodon i Amigó founded the Badalona Textile School in 1906, which was later taken over by his son, Camil Rodon i Font. The School's publication, *Cataluña Textil*, featured various articles on Jacquard's life and work and on artistic Jacquard fabrics, which often contain photographs that provide valuable information about the type of textiles produced. Although more than one loom was available to students for practising the Jacquard technique, there is no evidence to suggest that portraits or commemorative fabrics were produced in the same volume in Badalona as in Sabadell. The students reproduced other Jacquards — from the private textile collection of Pau Rodon — for their assessed practical work. In 1915 an exhibition was organised to display the students' work, which included portraits of Beethoven, Schiller, and other historical figures.

22 RODÓN I FONT, Camil. "El retrato aplicado al tejido". *Cataluña Textil*, vol. IX, no. 103, April 1915. Badalona, pp. 52-54.

Sabadell Swimming Club. Cotton. 1966. 25 x 16 cm. MHS 17972. Photograph: David Gonzàlez Ruíz/AHS.

Crucifixus est. Cotton. 1955. 13 x 7 cm. Josep Cusidó Collection. Photograph: Quico Ortega/CDMT.

St. Antoni Maria Claret. Cotton. 1951. 12.5 x 6 cm. Josep Cusidó Collection. Photograph: Jaume Cusidó.

The cutting plan for the portrait was based on a photograph by Kaulak,[23] in which the monarch appeared in the uniform of the Hussars of Pavia. Weaved by the students[24] under the direction of Narcís Giralt, this was the first Jacquard produced in Sabadell in which we see evidence of the double-cloth weave (two layers of cloth that are weaved together, using two needles and two cutting plans),[25] which would later be used by Lluís Mas for his own Jacquard projects. From the date on the finished piece we can assume that work began in 1912, but it was not until 14 January 1915 that the portrait was presented to Rafael Andrade, Civil Governor of Barcelona, and to Enric Prat de la Riba, president of the Catalan Mancomunitat. In addition to the finished fabric conserved at the Sabadell History Museum, surviving copies can also be seen at the CDMT, the Badalona Museum (where it is part of the Pau Rodon textile collection) and the Royal Palace in Madrid, where the original photograph by Kaulak is also displayed.

The next signed and dated Jacquard portrait would not appear until three years after the death of Narcís Giralt. Most of these decorative fabrics were created not as gifts or tributes but as school projects, manufactured using a manual Jacquard loom with 200 needles, which was more straightforward to operate than the larger loom donated by *Balsach*. Directed by Lluís Mas, they include the image of Our Lady of Montserrat, weaved by Amadeu Cusidó in 1929, in this case in worsted. It could date from the same period as the portrait of a girl playing, which reproduces *The Young Girl* of Ludwig von Zumbusch; the author and exact date have not been ascertained, but the portrait is weaved in silk (?) and shows similar technical characteristics to the earlier piece. The

23 Antonio Cánovas del Castillo y Vallejo (Madrid, 1862- 1933), known as Kaulak. He took several photographs of the king, one of which was used as the model for the silk portrait. In 1904, Alfonso XIII of Spain saw Joan Vilatobà's work at an exhibition of the Union of Manufacturers in Sabadell and commissioned an official portrait, granting Viltobà the status of purveyor to the Royal household. The image of the resulting portrait is a photograph taken by Kaulak.

24 Of the students, we know that Lluís Mas i Gomis was involved in producing the portrait. We have been unable to identify the others.

25 In this case, there were two silk warps (one white and one black), with a density of 104-106 threads per centimetre, and two wefts (one white and one black), with a density of 50-52 threads per centimetre. Approximately 14,000 punch cards were required.

A. School of Arts and Crafts of Sabadell. Silk. 1927. 5.5 x 5.5 cm. MHS 1728.
B. Sabadell Mayor's Office. Silk. 1927. 5.5 x 5.5 cm. MHS 1732.
C. Caixa d'Estalvis de Sabadell. Silk. 1927. 5.5 x 5.5 cm. MHS 1734.
D. Union of Manufacturers of Sabadell. Silk. 1927. 5.5 x 5.5 cm. MHS 1726.

Photographs: David Gonzàlez Ruíz/ AHS.

portrait of a gypsy woman, which bears only the inscription "School of Industry of Sabadell", was also weaved in silk (?) and bears technical similarities to both of the previous examples. The portrait was based on a photograph by Joan Vilatobà, which can be seen in the Sabadell Art Museum.[26] The same technique and style were used to produce the image of Christ titled *Crucifixus*, weaved in cotton and dated 1955, which bears the initials E.I. / J.V., standing for the School of Industry and Josep Vilardell. The portrait of Antoni Maria Claret,[27] a patron of the School of Industry, was weaved by students in 1951 under the direction of Mas, as indicated in the inscription; the cotton portrait was produced to commemorate the canonisation of Antoni Maria Claret. Finally, the pennant of the Sabadell Swimming Club, weaved in cotton and overseen by Mas, was produced in 1966 to mark the club's 50th anniversary.

In 1927, as part of the 25th anniversary celebrations, the same manual loom was used to create a series of small silk seals[28] representing the School's supporting institutions — the Union of Manufacturers of Sabadell, the Caixa d'Estalvis de Sabadell, the Sabadell Mayor's Office and the School of Arts and Crafts — that are conserved at the Sabadell History Museum.

By this time, Lluís Mas i Gomis (1890-1971) had taken over the teaching of textile theory and technique, following in the footsteps of his mentor. Portraits of politicians and monarchs were no longer the fashion and the School generally

26 Sabadell Art Museum, rec. no. 1526.

27 Antoni Maria Claret i Clarà (1807-1870), born into a family of weavers. He worked in a textile factory and studied textile design at the Escola Llotja in Barcelona.

28 Measuring 5.5 x 5.5 cm.

Our Lady of Good Health. Cotton.1929. 59.5 x 32.5 cm. MHS 1742. Photograph: David Gonzàlez Ruíz/AHS. See more.

produced artistic pieces by private commission or as commemorative items, in significantly fewer numbers. Of the Jacquard portraits weaved on the Vincenzi loom during the Giralt era, the following survive: Our Lady of Good Health (1929),[29] weaved in cotton and commissioned by Josep Gorina; Alcalá Zamora, in silk (1933), commissioned by an association of local businessmen; and **Ferran Casablancas**, in cotton (1953).

After Giralt's time the *Balsach* loom remained in operation, but it was used less frequently. Changing fashions and, most fundamentally, the sheer cost of the endeavour, had seen the local tradition of Jacquard portrait weaving begin to fade, particularly in the years after the Civil War. Rafael Barbany i Duran (1914-1966), a former student of the School of Arts and Crafts and a collector of artistic Jacquards, wrote an open letter to the mayor calling for renewed appreciation of the tradition, which was published in the *Diario de Sabadell*[30]:

> *At the School of Arts and Crafts, the birthplace of most of the techniques used in our textile industry and of those currently in development (…), there was a tradition by which each graduating class would produce the "cutting plan" to create a portrait with the School's "Vincenzi" loom of the most prominent figures of the time. This continually refreshed local artistic production and demonstrated that the prospective technicians were not only concerned with the industrial side of their profession but also contributed — in their modest but praiseworthy way — to the artistic life of the city.*

Barbany called for the weaving of silk Jacquards to be resumed and proposed that the first design should be a portrait of Ferran Casablancas Planell, in recognition of his international standing. He offered his services for the project:

> *As a former student of the School of Industry I am prepared to offer my humble cooperation to revive this beautiful tradition of local textile technique.*

The suggestion was met positively. The mayor, Josep Maria Marcet i Coll, put the proposal to the director of the School of Industry at the time, Josep Sanmiquel i Planell, who accepted and set the process in motion.

So it was that, thanks to Rafael Barbany i Duran, in 1953 the first portrait of Ferran Casablancas was designed and weaved,[31] a project that was kept a secret from its subject. The finished portrait was presented to him on an emotional occasion the following year. The project was directed by Lluís Mas

29 In 1929 the School of Arts and Crafts took part in the Universal Exhibition in Barcelona, where it exhibited some of the artistic textiles produced by the theory students of Lluís Mas. Our Lady of Good Health was designed specifically for the event.

30 "Conversations with the Mayor", in the *Diario de Sabadell*, 28 March 1953, p. 2.

31 Silk fabric, with 2,304 needles and 6,072 punch cards.

◂ Jacquard loom used to weave a portrait of the president of the Spanish Second Republic, Niceto Alcalà-Zamora. School of Arts and Crafts of Sabadell. From left to right: Albert Mitjans, Ricard Mampel, Rafael Barbany, Enric Soler, Jaume Tintó, Miquel Fernández, Ignasi Puigdellívol, Joan Guarch, Joan Brossa, Lluís Mas and Salvador Pujol. Sabadell, May 1934. Photograph: Francesc Casañas Riera/AHS. FCR01782.

▾ Alcalá Zamora. Silk. 1933. 72.5 x 56 cm. Josep Cusidó Collection. Photograph: Jaume Cusidó.

32 Vicenç Giner, Antoni Urroz, Joan Boix, Antoni Estrada, Jordi Marmiñà, Francesc Coll, Joan Sellés i Tortajada?

33 An example is conserved in the Josep Cusidó Collection. Cusidó remarked that Sixte Graneri was referred to as "the poet of cloth".

— who oversaw both the artistic and the technical work — and executed by his students,[32] each of whom took charge of a particular area of the design. Specifically, we know that Josep Cusidó produced the ear, the neck, the seal, the signature, the background and the frame. According to a letter to Ferran Casablancas written by Cusidó, the group worked with boundless enthusiasm, driven by their evident admiration for Casablancas. In order to prepare the cutting plan, adopting the same approach as for the earlier Jacquards, the group projected a photograph of Casablancas onto paper, determining the dimensions on the basis of the size and needle capacity of the loom; the picks were overlaid in tempera. The portrait was weaved in cotton, using the double-cloth technique introduced by Giralt.

In the following years the same loom was used to create the portraits of Sixte Graneri (Graneri, Barbany, Cusidó, 1958), Lluís Mas (Josep Cusidó and former students, 1961), Pope John XXIII (Rafael Barbany, 1962) and Francisco Franco (Jordi Marmiñà, 1963) and to re-weave the original portrait of Ferran Casablancas (1974).

The portrait of Casablancas, then, was followed by the portrait of Sixte Graneri,[33] at the request of his son Ricard, who had been impressed by the quality of Barbany's work on the earlier piece and asked him to direct the project. In addition to Ricard Graneri Fabregat and Rafael Barbany, the technical team included Josep Cusidó (assistant designer), Joan Majó Borgunó

▶ Sixte Graneri. Silk. 1958. 27 x 20 cm approx. Josep Cusidó Collection. Photograph: Quico Ortega/CDMT.

▶ J. Cusidó. R. Graneri and R. Barbany with the cutting plan for the portrait of Sixte Graneri. Josep Cusidó Collection. Photograph: Quico Ortega/CDMT.

Lluís Mas. Silk. 1961. 36 x 33 cm. MHS 1637. Photograph: David Gonzàlez Ruíz/AHS. See more.

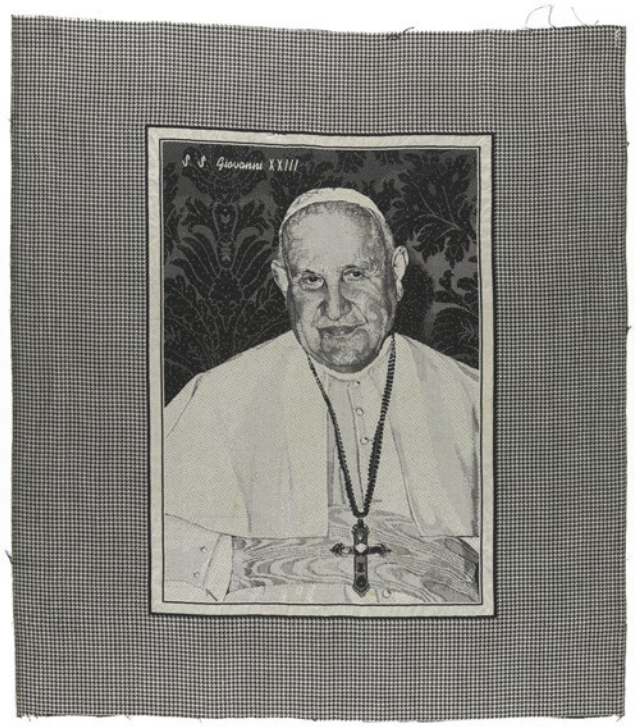
(floor manager), Jaume Vilardell Miró (assistant) and Josep Lladó Ventura (apprentice). A projector was borrowed from *Foto Club Barcelona* to expand the image to the required dimensions. The project was begun at Barbany's home, where the initial watercolour sketch was produced; this was overlaid with the stitching pattern at the Graneri premises. Work on the cutting plan began in early 1957, with a scheduled completion date of 28 March, Saint Sixtus' Day. This deadline, however, had to be pushed back when Josep Cusidó was called up for military service. Significant progress had in fact been made by early March but work then slowed considerably and the final cutting plan was not completed until 24 January 1958. Weaving then began immediately, carried out on the School's own loom using 2,304 needles. The team was proud of its portrait, particularly the shading of the left ear, which set the standard for the rest of the design. The most complicated sections were the tie, the chin and the neck, followed by the right eye, forehead and hair.[34]

When Lluís Mas retired, a group of his former students, together with the *Agrupacions Professionals Narcís Giralt*,[35] decided to weave a portrait of their mentor on the very loom to which Mas had devoted so many hours. The final cutting plan took a year to complete,[36] between 1958 and 1959, and required

34 According to Josep Cusidó (from an interview in 2015).

35 The *Agrupacions Professionals Narcís Giralt* were formed in 1954 as an association of former students of the School of Arts and Crafts.

36 They had to work in secret, hidden from Mas, in their free time and on national holidays, at the *Agrupacions Professionals Narcís Giralt*, in the offices of the company *Suc. de J. Tatché i Palau* and at the home of Josep Cusidó.



His Holiness Pope John XXIII. Silk.1962. 35.5 x 31.5 cm. MHS 1724. Photograph: David Gonzàlez Ruíz/AHS.

some one thousand hours of work.[37] The original team was formed by twelve contributors,[38] although only two finished the design, working at weekends at Cusidó's home.[39] The original cutting plan measured 150 x 180 cm and was signed "J. Cusidó and alumni".[40] Since a new assembly was required[41], the weaving stage was delayed. Work eventually began in 1961, with one minor change: Cusidó's name was removed from the design. In terms of technique, the design was produced using *sfumato* effects on a double-cloth silk weave. The weaving was overseen by Marmiñà i Coll, using 1,280 needles for the portrait itself and 1,024 for the border, and a total of 6,304 punch cards. The portrait was presented to Mas in acknowledgement of his long and distinguished teaching career, during a special event held on 20 January 1961 at the offices of the Union of Manufacturers.

In 1956 there was growing interest in creating a portrait of Pope John XXIII, an idea originally suggested by Ricard Graneri. Once the idea had been approved, Graneri sought the help of Barbany, who also requested the collaboration of Cusidó, as artistic designer, and of Jaume Vilardell. The final portrait was weaved on the loom at the School of Industry in 1962. Many of the copies were sold to others in the industry, to designers and to textile enthusiasts, often long-term collectors of artistic portraits of this type.

37 The hours of work behind each of the pieces are discussed by Josep Cusidó in "Entrevista personal" and in CUSIDÓ. J. "Un art poc conegut. Evocació personal en el centenari de l'Escola Industrial d'Arts i Oficis de Sabadell". A *Sabadellencs. Quadern de les idees, les arts i les lletres*. Sabadell, February 2002. No. 134, pp. 36-38.

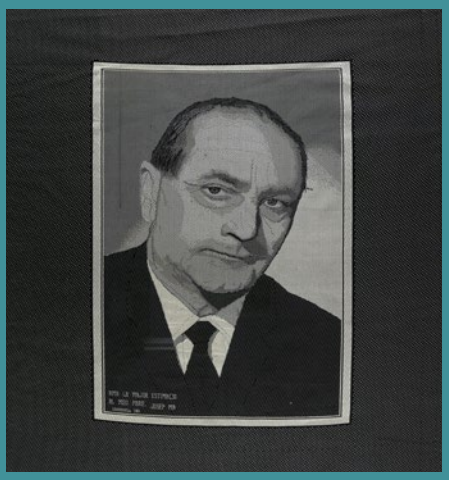
38 The other contributors were Joan Montserrat, Antoni Urroz, Joan Boix, Manuel Parera, Jaume Vilardell, Orsini Sotorra, Antoni Estrada, Rafael Alsina, Rafael Barbany and Ricard Graneri. Weavers: Jordi Marmiñà, Francesc Coll and Joan Sellés.

39 Josep Cusidó conserves photographs of the whole process: from the photograph of Mas (the original was donated to the Historical Archive of Sabadell), the sketches and drafts of the cutting plan to photographs of the completed plan from October 1959, with J. Cusidó, Antoni Puig and Vicenç Giner. Antoni Puig i Campanà, then a student of textile theory and design assistant. Vicenç Giner i Huguet, expert in textile theory trained at the School of Arts and Crafts of Sabadell, and a former Student of Lluís Mas.

40 Cut by *Mas Lluch, S.A.*, in Barcelona. The resulting image measures 20 x 27cm.

41 The loom assemblies in Sabadell were overseen by *Serraviñals*.

Francisco Franco. Silk. 1963. 40 x 33 cm. MHS 5788. Photograph: David Gonzàlez Ruíz/ AHS.



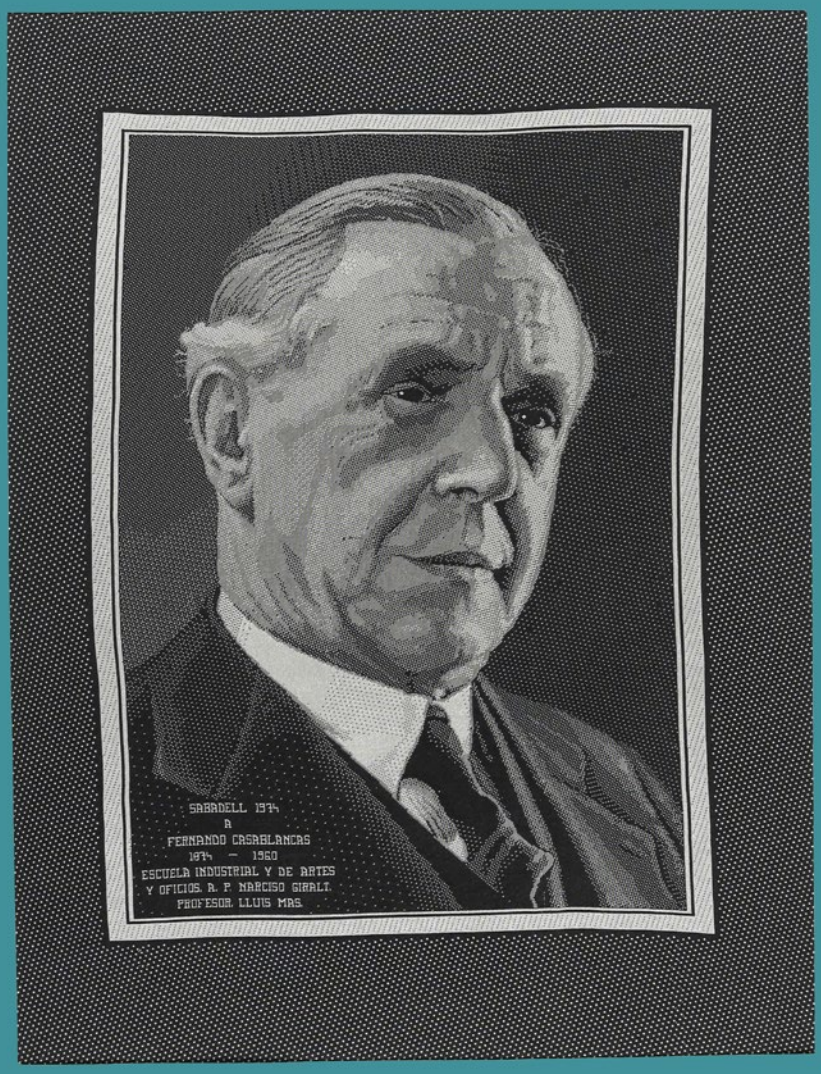
Paco Montfort. Silk. 1963. 37 x 33.5 cm. Jordi Marmiñà Collection. Photograph: David González Ruíz/AHS.

42 Personal interview, 2015.

As we have seen, Jordi Marmiñà took over the teaching of textile theory and technique following the retirement of his mentor Lluís Mas. Marmiñà had already been involved in the creation of several artistic portraits, so planning new pieces was a challenge well within his capabilities, although as he explained,[42] if the portrait was produced too quickly, the results were not always satisfactory. After the floods of 1962, the director of the School of Arts and Crafts, Josep Caldas i Nogué, commissioned a silk portrait of Franco. The original photograph for the design, however, was not a high quality print, hence the resulting cutting plan was unlikely to be a success. The only element that Marmiñà viewed with pride was the Laureate Cross of San Fernando, which he had commissioned to the master designer Manuel Rallo, following a visit to a military uniform and appliques specialist in Barcelona, where the sketch could be taken from an original piece. A group of six or seven second-year students devoted two hours a week to the cutting plan, but before they had set out all of the picks the president of the Union, Josep Casas, asked them to speed up the process as Franco would shortly be arriving on an official visit. The cutting design was not properly configured at this point and, according to Marmiñà, more than three-hundred hours of work were still required. The team did everything it could, and once at *Mas Lluch* the cards were punched in two days. Yet despite the assistance of Lluís Mas himself, the portrait did not reach the same levels of perfection as the previous one, and in fact never made it into the hands of its subject, either because Franco had left earlier than planned or because the president of the Union could not bring himself to present it.

Just as Ricard Graneri produced the portrait of his father, a portrait of Paco Montfort, dating from 1963, was also produced by his son, Josep Maria, with the assistance of Jordi Marmiñà.

On 20 January 1963, to mark the feast of St. Sebastian, patron of the textile industry, a special exhibition was organized to showcase the artistic fabrics



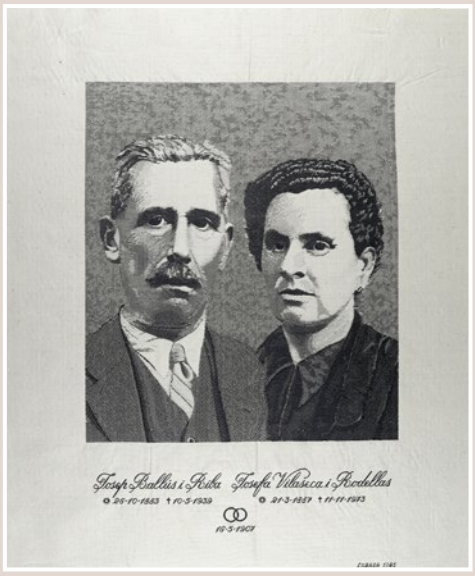
Ferran Casablancas. Silk. 1974. 36 x 34 cm. MHS 17968. Photograph: David Gonzàlez Ruíz/AHS. See more.

produced at the School of Arts and Crafts of Sabadell. The exhibits were displayed in the premises used by the *Agrupacions Professionals Narcís Giralt*, alongside other artistic fabrics on loan from private owners. The exhibition was completed by the full collection of Lluís Mas, which included fabrics from outside Spain. Among the exhibits was the portrait of Franco, which was displayed between the cutting plan produced by Mas and the portrait of Casablancas. The critic for the local newspaper described them as "compositions of high technical-artistic value" of impressive quality, with enormously valuable detailing and shading.[43]

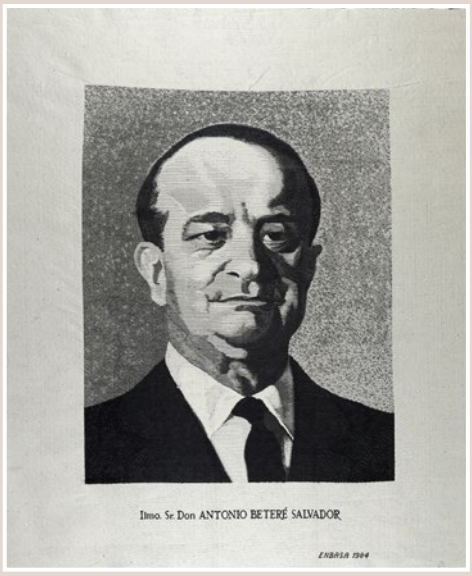
Several years later, in 1974, the Sabadell History Museum organized a similar exhibition, with the same framed fabrics. Since then, no dedicated exhibition of the School's artistic fabrics has been curated.

Also in 1974, a run of five hundred reproductions of Ferran Casablancas portrait was commissioned[44] to mark the centenary of his birth. The work was made possible by Vicenç Mas (son of Lluís), who had kept the cutting plan for the original piece. For the new portrait, the original seal was removed and

43 "Agrupaciones Narciso Giralt. Inauguración de una exposición de tejidos artísticos". Article in the *Diari de Sabadell*, 22 January 1963.
44 Financed by *Centre Metal·lúrgic*.



Mr and Mrs Ballús Vilaseca. Silk. 1986. 32.5 x 27 cm. MHS 17970. Photograph: David Gonzàlez Ruíz/AHS.



Antonio Beteré. Silk. 1984. 32.5 x 27 cm. MHS 17971. Photograph: David Gonzàlez Ruíz/AHS.

replaced with the emblem of the *Agrupacions Professionals Narcís Giralt*. The School was closed at the time, the building having been sold, but Marmiñà was able to resurrect the old loom. The technical team, which Giralt led himself, was formed by Pere Bigorra (head of the textile section of *Agrupacions Professionals Narcís Giralt*), Celestí Canals (foreman), Feliu Sabés and Salvador Soley.[45]

The last attempt to plan and weave a commemorative fabric with the Vincenzi loom at the School of Arts and Crafts was ultimately frustrated by a lack of funding, and the portraits of King Juan Carlos and Queen Sofia of Spain were never produced. In 1975, Peñalver, then director of the School, asked Marmiñà to create a portrait of the princes of Spain (as they remained at that time), and Marmiñà did in fact complete the cutting plan, but the weaving stage never came to fruition, essentially due to a lack of funding. Marmiñà explained that for this piece the picks[46] were laid out with marker pens, which proved disastrous as the cleaning staff wiped a damp cloth over the surface and smeared the ink, damaging the plan irreparably. The *Mas Lluch* computer, which was used to read the plan, did not recognise the marks and could not process the new squared paper supplied by *Figuerola*. In any case, Marmiñà recalls that the initial work was based on a colour photograph that did not allow them to clearly discern the shading needed to create a good sketch. Starting again would be too costly, and the project was abandoned.

From this point on the loom would be used only for a handful of private commissions[47] until 1986, when it was finally retired from service. ●

45 Salvador Soley i Junoy (1941) studied at the School of Arts and Crafts of Sabadell, coinciding with Mas' final year and Marmiñà's first.
46 Marking the desired interlacings of warp and weft, on the squared paper to create the cutting design.
47 Such as Mr and Mrs Ballús Vilaseca, commissioned by *Enbasa* (a contraction of the name Enric Ballús), a company founded in Sant Boi de Lluçanès in 1963 that produced Jacquard mattress fabrics. Also, the portrait of Antonio Beteré Salvador, a mattress manufacturer, whose company is now the *Flex* group. Marmiñà was involved only in the weaving, which was done on Saturdays with Macià, the foreman at *Enbasa*.

Isadora Duncan and fashion: classical revival and modernity

by Núria Aragonès Riu, postdoctoral fellowship University of Barcelona

In the early years of the twentieth century, against a background of profound social change, the dancer Isadora Duncan was one of the key figures in the art world who championed the renewal of artistic forms and the liberation from convention. In order to build the foundations of modern dance, Duncan looked to nature and to the Graeco-Roman classical past, with its timeless values and its expressions of genuine emotion that the dancer sought to reproduce through spontaneous movement. The return to classical models was a goal shared by many artists close to Isadora, like Maurice Denis and Antoine Bourdelle from France and Josep Clarà from Catalonia, with whom the dancer maintained a heartfelt friendship. Graeco-Latin reminiscences were also present in the decorative arts and fashion with the revival of the *Directoire* and *Empire* styles, and in the performing arts in the form of the influential *Ballets Russes* and the plays performed by the great actor Mounet-Sully at the Comédie Française. And at the turn of the twentieth century the notion of "total art" was also firmly on the agenda, with its convergence of the performance arts, painting, set design, illustration, decorative arts and particularly fashion, which played a decisive role in the transition from *Art Nouveau* to *Art Déco*.

In this artistic context, the dancer Isadora Duncan devoted herself body and soul to the search for the values of truth and beauty in modern dance. Nowhere was this desire more clearly reflected than in the highly original styles that she wore both on and off stage. With her forceful personality, Isadora challenged social conventions in every aspect of her life. The sincerity and simplicity of movement found their expression in a minimalist dress style, composed of a tunic or a semi-transparent veil over the dancer's naked body. The admiration for the natural forms of the body was a fundamental aspect of Isadora's ideology:

> The beauty of the human form is not chance. One cannot change it by dress. […] It is because the human form is not and cannot be at the mercy of fashion or the taste of an epoch that the beauty of woman is eternal.[1]

1 DUNCAN, Isadora, *El arte de la danza y otros escritos*, ed. José Antonio Sánchez, Akal, Madrid, 2003 (Fuentes de Arte, 19), p. 92.

Isadora was highly critical of the artificiality of the dress of traditional ballet dancers, condemned to being "prisoners of the *maillot*"[2] and to repeating time and again the same mechanical gestures on the tips of their toes in anti-natural *pointe* shoes. The new free dance would transform dancers' costumes, which would now be made out of flowing, undulating fabrics that allowed natural freedom of movement. Inspired by the iconography of ancient Greek ceramics and Greek and Roman sculpture, which she studied with passionate devotion at the British Museum, the Louvre and on her trips to Athens[3], Isadora rejected the tutu, shoes, and traditional salmon-coloured stockings of ballet and adopted classical robes and veils over her bare legs and feet:

> It never crossed my mind to wrap myself up in uncomfortable clothes or tie up my thighs and my throat, for isn't it what I mean to do to melt body and soul into a single, unified image of beauty?[4]

Light tunics inspired by classical models attested to this idea of timeless, authentic beauty that the dancer hoped to grasp with her art. [Fig. 1]

But in fact Isadora Duncan was neither the first nor the only dancer to revolutionise the aesthetic paradigms[5]. The American Loïe Fuller (1862-1928) had already experimented with the symbiosis between costume and body movement, wearing wide flowing robes with open sleeves to which she added extensions that caused a "butterfly wing" effect as she moved. Another figure much admired by Duncan was the Japanese actress and dancer Sada Yacco[6] (Sadayakko Kawakami 1871-1946), who was introduced to Europe by Loïe Fuller and caused an immediate sensation. Isadora discovered Sada Yacco on her first trip to Paris for the Universal Exhibition of 1900, and in her memoirs recalled how she eagerly attended Yacco's performances night after night.[7] Another of Isadora's contemporaries, the American Ruth Saint Denis (1879-1968), distinguished herself by her desire to break with the conventions of traditional ballet, and adopted a style marked by excess and oriental exoticism, which actually was at odds with Duncan's minimalist approach.

In the theatrical and artistic scene of the first years of the century we should also mention the *Ballets Russes*, who came to Europe in 1909 under Serge Diaghilev. The performances staged by the young choreographer Michel Fokine and the costumes of Leon Bakst were characterised by a marked Orientalism that caused a furore in pre-war Paris, but also introduced the reinterpretation of Graeco-Latin models in the *ballets grecs Narcis* (1911) *Daphnis et Chloé* (1912) and *L'Après-midi d'un Faune* (1912). These works bear witness to the influence of Isadora Duncan, whom Bakst and Fokine had seen on her tour of Russia in 1906.[8]

2 *Ibid*., p. 120.
3 LAFFON Juliette, PINET Hélène, CANTARUTTI Stéphanie (ed.), *Isadora Duncan (1877-1927): une sculpture vivante*, Musée Bourdelle, Paris, 2009, p. 308.
4 *Ibid*. p. 139.
5 See STEELE, Valerie (ed.), *Dance and Fashion*, Yale University Press, Fashion Institute of Technology, New Haven-New York, p. 23 ff.
6 See DOWNER, Lesley, *Madame Sadayakko: the geisha who bewitched the west*, Gotham books, New York, 2004.
7 DUNCAN, Isadora, *Mi vida*, Salvat, Barcelona, 1995, p. 83.
8 OSMA,Guillermo de, *Mariano Fortuny: his life and work*, Aurum Press, Londres, 1980, p. 132.

Fig. 1. Isadora Duncan in Glück's *Iphigénie en Tauride*, 1904. Photograph by Atelier Elvira (Munich), © Bibliothèque nationale de France, département Arts du Spectacle, ASP 4-ICO PER-8426 (1).

This aesthetic revival of classical antiquity, for which French historians invented the term *anticomanie*[9], permeated not just the fine arts, theatre and dance but the world of fashion as well, precisely at the time when *haute couture* was becoming established as an industry. We see this in several passages in Isadora's memoirs which describe her street clothes: almost always she wore light dresses, usually white, in the *Empire* style, which complemented her Graeco-Roman sandals and Liberty hats.[10] The firm founded by Arthur Lasenby Liberty in 1875 initially specialised in importing decorative arts from Japan, but soon became a reference point in the fashion world thanks to its associations with designers, architects and artists in the Arts & Crafts and *Art Nouveau* movements who were now turning their hands to clothing design.[11] The radical new fashions proposed by Liberty suited Isadora perfectly as she looked back to the past in search of modern and innovative styles. Liberty also worked with the famous writer and illustrator of children's books Kate Greenaway (1846-1901), even making some of the costumes that appear in her drawings. In a very early episode reported in her memoirs, while she was probably still a teenager, Isadora described herself as wearing a Kate Greenaway white muslin dress and a straw hat[12]. It is easy to picture the young dancer as one of the charming creatures wearing simple, diaphanous dresses with high waists and short sleeves in the neoclassical style which are so characteristic of Greenaway's illustrations in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.[13]

A few years later, around 1909, Isadora met Paul Poiret (1879-1944), the most influential designer of the moment and the man who brought the new air of modernity to Parisian artistic society:

> And now, for the first time, I visited a fashionable dressmaker, and fell to the fatal lure of stuffs, colours, form—even hats. I, who had always worn a little white tunic, woolen in winter, linen in summer, succumbed to the enticement of ordering beautiful gowns, and wearing them. Only I had one excuse. The dressmaker was no ordinary one, but a genius—Paul Poiret, who could dress a woman in such a way as also to create a work of art.[14]

The great *couturier* proposed dresses without waists and released the female body from the unnatural restrictions imposed by corsets and other such garments. Though well-known for his Orientalist tastes, Poiret created several models of neoclassical inspiration which recalled the *Empire* styles of Joséphine Bonaparte.[15] Examples can be found in the album *Les Robes de Paul Poiret* by the prolific illustrator Paul Iribe, which served as a luxury catalogue of the

9 For a fuller development of this question, see ARAGONÈS RIU, Núria, "El classicisme com a signe de modernitat en la indumentària al tombant del segle xx", in *Lligams entre tradició i modernitat. Noves interpretacions al voltant del món clàssic*, ed. Grup de Recerca GRACMON, Universitat de Barcelona, pp. 9-29.

10 See DUNCAN, Isadora, *Mi vida*, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

11 For example, the architect Edward William Godwin was named director of Liberty's Department of Fashion in1884. See ANSCOMBE, Isabelle, *Arts & Crafts Style*, Phaidon Press, London, 1996, p. 158. As a result of his affair with the famous dancer Ellen Terry, Godwin had a son, Edward Gordon-Craig, a leading figure in the scenic revolution of the *avant-garde* and Isadora Duncan's great love.

12 DUNCAN, Isadora, *Mi vida, op. cit.*, p. 70.

13 See the illustrations reproduced in LAMBOURNE, Lionel, *The Æsthetic Movement*, Phaidon, Londres, 1996, p. 77 and p. 130.

14 DUNCAN, Isadora, *Mi vida, op. cit.*, p. 251.

15 See, for example, the dress "Joséphine", 1907, silk satin and tulle, preserved at Les Arts Décoratifs, Paris, Collection UFAC.

1908 collection. Isadora maintained a close friendship with the dressmaker and occasionally gave him advice on aesthetic matters.[16] The dancer also played a major role in the wonderful themed party organised by Poiret on 20 June 1912 at the Butard Pavilion, where the guests' costumes emulated those of the mythological figures in the ballets of Louis XIV.[17] The Museum of the City of New York preserves a short greenish tunic, made by Poiret and inspired by the Greek male *chiton*, which may correspond to what Isadora wore that night. The museum has another dress by the French designer, made of ivory-coloured silk and embroidered with a fretwork motif on the bust and neckline, which belonged to Isadora.[18] Poiret was one of the first *couturiers* to incorporate cosmetics and decoration in his *haute couture* brand, thus encompassing the design of all aspects of the modern woman's lifestyle. In fact he decorated a room in Duncan's house in Neuilly with black velvet curtains reflected on the walls in golden mirrors, a black carpet, and a divan with cushions of Oriental textures.[19] The designer also appears to have designed dresses for Isadora's daughter Deirdre, with many adornments and embroidery.[20]

In a photograph[21] depicting the dancer with her two children in her arms, the little Deirdre may be wearing the famous Delphos tunic[22] made by Mariano Fortuny i Madrazo (1871-1949). The dancer was a great admirer of the versatile Spanish artist who lived at the Palazzo degli Orfei in Venice, where he created his designs.[23] Several pictures show Isadora's adopted daughters dressed in Delphos gowns[24], and a drawing of 1917 signed by Georges Barbier, a great illustrator of modern fashion, shows Isadora in a dance pose wearing a fine pleated gown very like Fortuny's creation.[25] Although he was not part of the Parisian *haute couture*, Fortuny's innovative designs were immensely popular among the independent-minded ladies of European and American artistic society. What is more, dance and theatre were Fortuny's favourite contexts for experimentation in scenery, costumes and lighting. Before the invention of the Delphos gown, Fortuny had designed a silk scarf printed with Greek motifs known as the Knossos veil,[26] which adapted to the shape of the body and

16 POIRET Paul, *Vistiendo la época*, Parsifal Ediciones, Barcelona, 1989, p. 143.

17 Poiret describes the party in his memoirs, and mentions a dance which Isadora improvised to a Bach aria. POIRET Paul, *Vistiendo…*, *op. cit.*, p. 140.

18 The photographs of the two dresses are reproduced in KODA, Harold and BOLTON, Andrew, *Poiret*, Yale University Press- Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York-New Haven, 2007, pp. 74-75.

19 DUNCAN, Isadora, *Mi vida, op. cit.*, p. 275.

20 DUNCAN, Isadora, *Mi vida, op. cit.*, p. 282.

21 Photograph dated January 1913, preserved at the Musée Bourdelle (Paris), reproduced in LAFFON Juliette, PINET Hélène, CANTARUTTI Stéphanie (ed.), *Isadora Duncan…*, *op. cit.*, p. 224.

22 Mariano Fortuny created the Delphos dress around 1907. He gave it this name because it was inspired in the garments of the Charioteer of Delphi, a sculpture from the Archaic period dated 450 BC. This is a finely pleated silk satin dress, with a natural drape falling from the shoulders. See OSMA, Guillermo de, *Mariano Fortuny, arte, ciencia y diseño*, Ollero y Ramos, Madrid, 2012, p. 140.

23 Isadora may have discovered Fortuny's creations on her visit to Venice between 1909 and 1910. SeeLAFFON Juliette, PINET Hélène, CANTARUTTI Stéphanie (ed.), *Isadora Duncan…*, *op. cit.*, p. 269.

24 Irma Duncan wore a Delphos gown to Isadora's wedding when she married the Russian poet Sergei Yesenin in 1922. The photograph is reproduced in OSMA, Guillermo de, *Mariano Fortuny, arte, ciencia…*, *op. cit.*, p. 221. The Roger-Viollet collection in Paris preserves a photograph from around 1920 attributed to Boris Lipnitzki in which Isadora's three adopted daughters appear (Lisa, Anna and Margot Duncan) all wearing Delphos dresses.

25 Plate reproduced in NUZZI, Cristina, *Fortuny nella Belle Epoque*, Electa, Milan, 1984, p. 67.

26 OSMA, Guillermo de, *Mariano Fortuny, arte, ciencia…*, *op. cit.*, pp. 138-139.

Fig. 2. Josep Clarà Ayats, "Isadora Duncan. Concert Colonne", 1913, lead pencil and pen with touches of watercolour on block paper, MNAC/MC 94132, © Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, Barcelona.

allowed the dancers great freedom of movement. It is no surprise that Isadora became a dedicated follower of his creations, which she wore both on and off the stage.[27]

Isadora became a fashion icon, and set trends not just on the stage but when she attended the theatre as a spectator as well. An article in the fashion magazine Vogue, for example, described in detail the dress she wore to the premiere of *Ballets Suédois* at the Theatre des Champs Elysées: black and sleeveless with a black tulle butterfly attached to one shoulder, her hair cut loose, and a muslin tiara.[28] The sculptor Josep Clarà (1878-1958) wrote a fascinating description in his personal diary of Isadora's dress when they attended the Concert Colonne at the Théâtre du Chatelet in Paris on March 30, 1913:

> Elle était ravissante habillée dans des gazes légères bleues, ses pieds chaussés de sandales, sa tête couverte par une riche coiffe de soie avec, sur le front, deux grosses pierres précieuses. Au cou un collier de pierres égyptiennes et sur l'épaule pour agrafer sa robe elle portait un beau camé ancien.[29]

27 BRANDSTETTER, Gabriele, *Poetics of Dance: Body, Image and Space in the Historical Avant-gardes*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2015, p. 105.
28 "Subtiles élégances vues au théâtre", *Vogue* (French version), vol. 2, nº 7, 1 April 1921, ed. Condé Nast, New York- Paris, p. 42.
29 CLARÀ, Josep, the agendas of the Clarà archives preserved at the MNAC: Agendes 1910-1913 (1. 1913 99674).

Fig. 3. Isadora Duncan in her pavilion at Bellevue, press photograph: Agence Meurisse (Paris), 1919,
© Bibliothèque nationale de France, département Estampes et photographie, EI-13 (2608).

The sculptor, sitting in the same box as Isadora, produced a delicate portrait of her wearing a silk headdress in a neoclassical style and a blue gown, tied with a clasp that left much of the back uncovered.[30] [Fig. 2] As Clara himself says, Isadora looked like goddess and caused a sensation at the theatre.

Isadora's strong creative personality meant that she did not settle for wearing the designs of other artists. She combined pieces of cloth and shawls, often decorated with Chinese embroidery[31], which she wore in a variety of ways [Fig. 3] and also designed her own dance costumes. In fact, the Archive of Irma Duncan[32] preserves a number of notes made by Isadora with instructions for making a long gown and a red silk stole.[33]

In her memoirs, Isadora also claimed to have created a precursor of the swimsuit during a trip to Abbazia in Croatia with her sister around 1900:

> It was then that I inaugurated a bathing costume which has since become popular — a light blue tunic of finest crêpe de chine, low necked, with little shoulder straps, skirt just above the knees, with bare legs and feet. As the custom of the ladies of that epoch was to enter the water severely garbed in black, with skirt between the knees and ankle, black stockings and black swimming shoes, you can well imagine the sensation I created.[34]

So Isadora Duncan was a pioneering figure in both the artistic and aesthetic domains. For her, the revolution in dance required a revolution in dress, not just on stage but in all the facets of her life. Dress was another means through which she reaffirmed her ideology and expressed her creativity, often challenging established tradition. And in fact, as fate would have it, her tragic death was caused by a piece of clothing: her long scarf accidentally caught in the wheel of her convertible on the coastal road in Nice, strangling her instantaneously. That fateful day in 1927 marked the end of a life entirely dedicated to art, and at the same time, the beginning of the creation of a legend. ●

30 CLARÀ, Josep, "Isadora Duncan. Concert Colonne", 1913, drawing in lead pencil and pen with touches of watercolour on block paper. MNAC/MC 94432.

31 Isadora mentions an embroidered shawl with Chinese motifs in *Mi Vida*, *op. cit.*, p. 234. A well-known photograph by Edward Steichen (published in *Camera Work*, nº 42-43, April-July 1913) shows Isadora lying on a divan with large printed cushions, wearing a tunic embroidered with Chinese motifs.

32 Irma Duncan Collection, Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts (New York).

33 This dress was on display at the Georgia Museum of Art. See the catalogue published by JOHNSON Kim Marie et al., *Isadora Duncan. Muse of Modernism*, Athens, Georgia Museum of Art, 1998, p. 13.

34 DUNCAN, Isadora, *Mi vida*, *op. cit.*, p. 124.

The roaring silk years

by Assumpta Dangla
Photographs: Esther de Prades Maria

The Catalan silk printing industry flourished in the 1920s, before the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in 1936. This was a time of change, with the arrival of the avant-garde and a keenness to break with established artistic norms, echoing the atmosphere on the streets of Europe's major capitals. Prints produced in this period were designed to take art to the mass market, heralding the arrival of a renewed aesthetic. As the artist Sonia Delaunay said[1]:

> *[The creations] will be sold to industrialists, who will examine how to lower the cost of goods sold through industrial production and look at how to boost sales. This will see fashion become democratised, and such a democratisation can only be welcome, as it will raise the general standard.*

The emergence of new trends was not limited to the major producers. Some smaller firms, such as *Ponsa* and *La Sedera Franco-Española*, also took an interest.

Ponsa Hermanos

The year 1859 saw the birth of the company formed by the capitalist Josep Ferrer i Vidal, a famous textile magnate, financier and politician, and the printer Josep Ponsa i Rius. In 1879 they founded the general partnership *Hijos de José Ponsa*, which in 1904 would become *Ponsa Hermanos*. The business moved several times, but during this period it was based in Sant Martí de Provençals, where fabrics were prepared, dyed, printed and finished. The company followed a bottom-up development strategy, having previously spun silk and even experimented with silk farming. In 1901 a new site was opened in Palma de Mallorca, known as Ses Sedes, and the factory in Sant Martí became used only for printing[2].

The legacy of *Ponsa*'s production is conserved in three Catalan museums. The Premià de Mar Textile Printing Museum and the Terrassa Textile Museum and Documentation Centre hold a collection of original designs, samples,

1 *Histoire singulière de l'impression textile.* Exhibition catalogue. Musée de l'Impression sur Étoffes, Mulhouse, 2000, p. 137.
2 CANALS, M. T., "Més d'un segle d'estampats", in *L'Estampació Tèxtil a Catalunya. Ponsa: art, disseny i indústria. Visions del patrimoni industrial, 1.* Museu de l'Estampació de Premià de Mar, 2006, pp. 37-61.

Original design from *La Sedera Franco-Española*, MEPM 5113 (c.1920). See more.

Printed silk fabrics from the *Ponsa Hermanos* sample book, MEPM 5861 (c. 1920). See more.

clothing and swatches from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, which was acquired by the Government of Catalonia and entrusted to the two institutions. These collections were added to with donations from private benefactors. The Barcelona Design Museum, meanwhile, received a donation of ten original sample books from *Jaume Ponsa*, along with wood templates that were passed to the MEPM[3]. Two sample books from *La Sedera Franco Española* have been conserved, together with a selection of designs that are thought to come from the same factory.

Ponsa created prints with the three most common systems in use at the time: woodblock printing, the rotary press and, towards the end of the 1930s, 'Lyonnaise' or silk-screen printing. In this early period the three systems operated side by side on the factory floor. Each method had specific features and its own advantages: wood templates were ideal for multi-coloured prints, the copper cylinders of the rotary press produced finely detailed designs, and silk-screen printing made it possible to create *rapports* that were broader in scope. Engraving the templates for woodblock printing required considerable skill. The specialist engravers Costa i Cortada worked for *Ponsa* from the end of the nineteenth century onwards, producing both wood templates and copper cylinders for rotary printing. Templates were also commissioned from specialists outside Catalonia, such as the engraver G. Merklen, based in Mulhouse[4]. The screens for Lyonnaise prints were acquired primarily from suppliers in Premià de Mar, in the province of Barcelona, which was home to a large number of workshops and studios that hand-engraved the glass plates required. Colour was achieved by applying synthetic dyes, such as aniline, and other dyes derived from coal tar, which created vibrant and brightly toned silks.

3 CARBONELL, Sílvia. "La memòria…" In: *Tot plegat. un retrat de la Catalunya tèxtil recent*. CDMT, Museu d'Arenys de Mar, 2016. pp. 28-53.
4 Album of original designs by *Ponsa* (1890-1935). MEPM.

Printed silk fabrics from the *Ponsa Hermanos* sample book, MEPM 5861 (c. 1920).

Original design by Joan Vidal i Ventosa, MEPM 5723 (1917).

The artisans

Fashions in Catalonia mirrored those in France. The trend books that arrived from Europe's design capitals, from studios such as *Bilbille & Co* and *Claude Frères*, for example, were the main source of inspiration. Designs were purchased abroad or commissioned from renowned artists at home, and factory directors would often select designs personally, travelling to workshops and design houses outside Spain to see the latest trends for themselves, although only a small proportion of the designs they acquired ever reached the market.

Prominent local designers included Joan Vidal i Ventosa, Josep Palau Oller, Josep Mompou, Enric Moyà, Josep Ferrer Albert, Josep Porta and the staff of *Marsà*. Vidal i Ventosa trained as a painter at La Llotja and studied sculpture with M. Fuxà. He was part of the group of *modernista* artists to frequent Els Quatre Gats, and later Cafè Guayaba, where Picasso, Manolo Hugué, Ismael Smith and Isidre Nonell were regular patrons[5]. Vidal is comparatively little known as a print designer, yet he spent years working in this medium. Josep Palau i Oller, known primarily as a furniture and toy designer, also turned his hand to fabric prints, on occasion working with Josep Mompou, and some surviving original drawings bear the stamps of the two workshops[6]. The extent of Palau's work as a print designer came to light in 2003, leading to the curation of two exhibitions. Much work remains, however, to bring the fabric designs of the other artists in this group to wider public awareness.

Catalans were quick to adapt to the new artistic trends and produced work which bears comparison with that of their foreign contemporaries, at a time when Catalan art no longer boasted the splendour of the *modernista* period. Looking outside Catalonia, *Ponsa* acquired its designs from artists

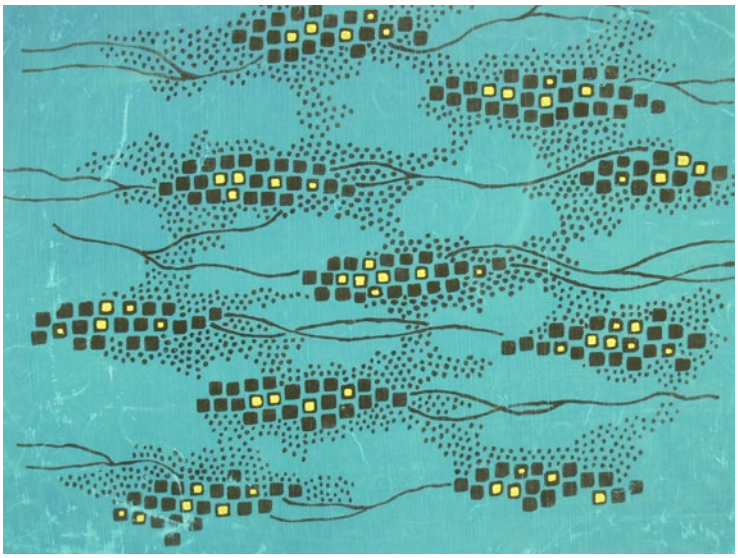
5 *Galeria d'autors*. Ruta del Modernisme. Institut Municipal del Paisatge Urbà, Barcelona, 2008, p. 213.

6 CARBONELL, S. and CASAMARTINA, J. *Josep Palau Oller. Del Modernisme a l'Art Déco*. CDMT, Terrassa, 2003.

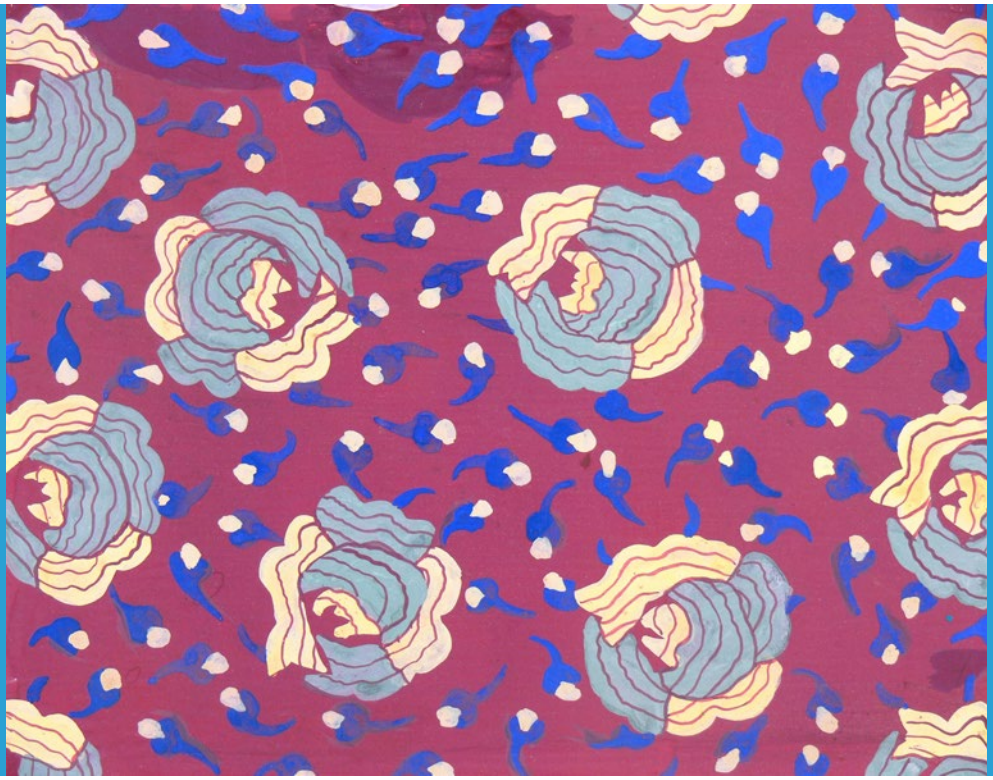
Original design by Marsà, MEPM 641 (1920-1930).

in Paris, Lyon and Mulhouse. One of the company's main suppliers was the E. Sins design studio, which also provided designs for other Catalan manufacturers such as *La España Industrial* in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Sins also worked with *La Lió-Barcelona*, which manufactured in Premià de Mar, in the 1920s and 1930s, and regularly received visits from company representatives. Other designers who established long-term working relationships with *La Lió-Barcelona* were C. Lefranc, whose studio was located in Lyon, and Léon Kittler and René Schrameck, both based in Mulhouse. The full list of designers who supplied to *Ponsa* is particularly long: other foreign contributors were E. P. Bonaparte, Arthur Litt, R. Blaise, J. Berger, Marc Rimaud, Landwerlind, J. Vernaison, Helder, Fred Lévy, R. De Grandclos, Louis Lang, M. Adrouer, Louis Inwiller and Georges Ordatchenko.[7] Later, in the 1940s, the Barcelona-based studios would come to prominence, with greater input from local designers. This trend gradually increased, and women also came to play a role.

7 DANGLA, A. "Art en moviment". In *L'estampació tèxtil a Catalunya. Visions del patrimoni industrial*. Museu de l'Estampació de Premià de Mar, 2006, pp. 90-95.



Original design by E. Sins, MEPM 873 (1922).



Original design by C. Lefranc, MEPM 2399 (1927).

Art in motion

Common decoration included floral, geometric, marine, exotic and figurative motifs. The emergence of the avant-garde called for research, and the era was characterised by exploration on every conceivable level. Paul Poiret, in addition to following the artistic trends of the era, explored the creation of a new aesthetic language with his students at the *Atélier Martine*[8]:

> *I created the Atélier Martine for the Decorative Arts [...]. I took in children aged around 12 from the working class neighbourhoods on the outskirts, who didn't go to school. I put aside several rooms in my house for them and had them work naturally, without a teacher [...]. Once the first weeks had passed I obtained marvellous results. These creatures, left to their own devices, quickly forgot the false and empirical precepts that they had been taught at school and rediscovered all pf the spontaneity and vitality of their true nature [...]. My role consisted in stimulating their activity and their taste without ever influencing them negatively or criticising them, so that the source of their inspiration remained pure and intact.*

Ponsa did not produce only art deco designs; it also created distinctly avant-garde fabrics, encompassing styles as diverse as Simultaneism, Cubism, Russian Constructivism and the abstract forms of De Stijl. Floral motifs took on a new geometric character, emblazoning clothing typified by an explosion of colours and flowing sense of movement. These effects were achieved with overlaid and fragmented designs, geometric shapes and sinuous, abstract forms. The rose was particularly common, transformed into a simplified grouping of two-dimensional segments.

8 POIRET, Paul. *Vistiendo la época*. Parsifal ediciones, Barcelona, 1989, p. 111.

Original designs from the *La Sedera Franco-Española* sample book, MEPM 5113 (c. 1920).

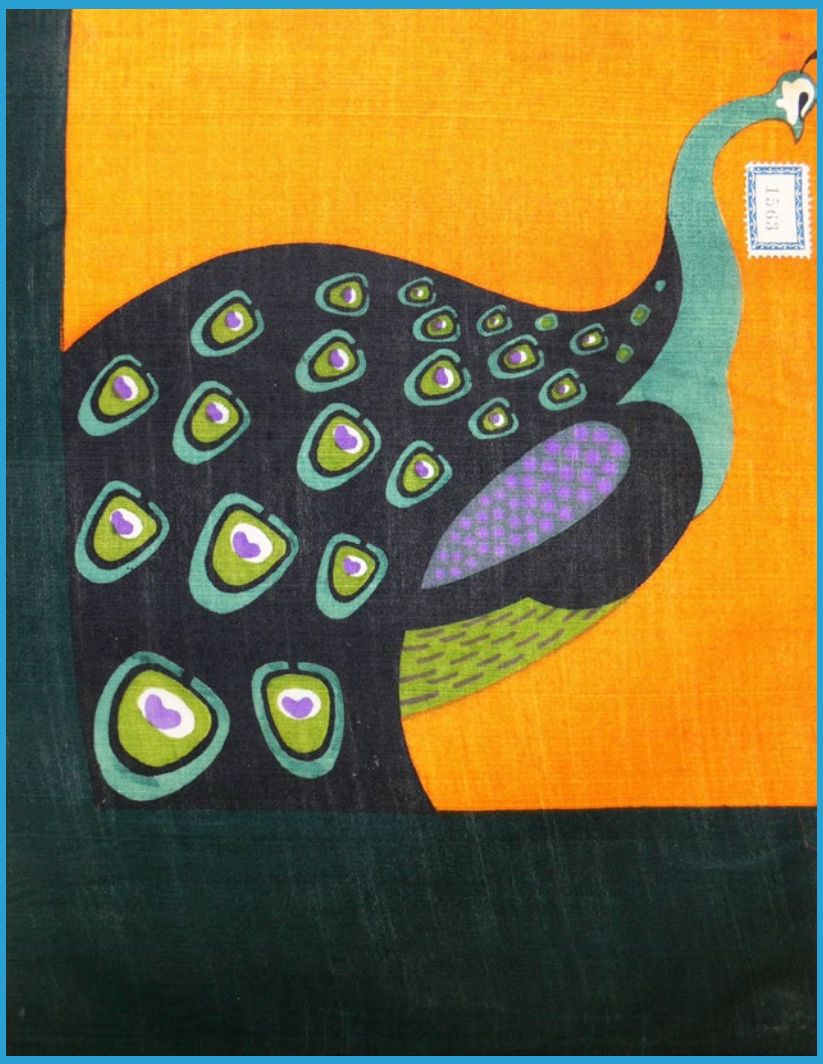
In some pieces, floral and plant motifs took on an aquatic appearance, while aquatic designs exuded a vegetative quality: jellyfish, urchins, fish, small organisms and a whole series of motifs presented abstractly and reminiscent of aquatic fauna. This is captured in the author Colette's description of curtain fabric[9]:

> *Yet it is nothing more than velvet cloth and a printed flower. The designer claims, "It is a poppy", and believes it. But I know that, swollen, segmented, delicately fringed and trailing a long, fibrous train, his flower is actually a jellyfish.*

The fascination with the East and exoticism, long present in European fabric printing, was also apparent in designs from *Ponsa*. The company produced a whole series of Japanising compositions of refined, stylised forms and a marked sense of movement. It also marketed many designs featuring Egyptian motifs, often used as borders for scarves. Papyrus leaves, pharaohs, jewels and canopic jars brought a visual richness and elegance to the company's new pieces, owing their design to the new forms of the art deco movement.

9 DUCHARNE, F. *Les folles années de la Soie*. Musée Historique des Tissus. Lyon, 1975. Exhibition catalogue, p. 9.

Original design, anonymous, MEPM 2488 (c. 1920).



Printed silk fabric from the *Ponsa Hermanos* sample book, MEPM 6025 (c. 1920).

Album of originals designs from *Ponsa*, 1898-1930 MEPM (unrecorded).

Album of originals designs from *Ponsa*, 1898-1930 MEPM (unrecorded).

The two surviving sample books from *La Sedera Franco Española* are notable for the prominence given to representations of leisure: shows, music, the wild dance of a cabaret actress dressed as a chambermaid, couples enjoying ballroom dancing, Charlie Chaplin in the role of Charlot, and other scenes of distraction and diversion. There are also scenes depicting women driving, Amazons, tennis players and women in the fashionable outfits of the period. These designs reflect the spirit of an era that has been referred to as "the roaring silk years", which inspired novel compositions for the decoration of lampshades, screens and scarves in particular.

In the last year restoration work has been completed on an album of original designs from *Ponsa* that has provided new information about the dates of the samples and the designers responsible for them. The reverse of some of the drawings bears the designer's name and a rough chronology, which has helped to establish more precise dates for some of the sample books. The work marks the culmination of efforts to research and recover the memory of *Ponsa* in the golden age of its designs. Through this work we have strived to paint a general picture of the progress so far and of recently launched initiatives, such as a study of the designers and engravers behind the company's output and the relationships that *Ponsa* established outside Catalonia.

Intimacy. The fragility of an ever-evolving concept

by Joan Mayné i Amat and Núria Sadurní i Puigbó

The history of undergarments is necessarily linked to changes in fashion and aesthetic trends, advances in technology and the development of new fabrics, but it is perhaps more fundamentally tied to the evolution of society and the prevailing mentalities of each era. It is difficult, for example, to understand the popularisation of now rudimentary items like the brassiere or tights without first considering the context in which this occurred, with the outbreak of the First World War in 1914. Similarly, to fully appreciate the rejection of traditional aesthetics by younger generations, which extends to the use of underwear, we must take into account the social revolution and shift in values represented by the hippy, pacifist, feminist and gay rights movements, among others, which emerged across the Western world in the wake of May 1968.

A glance at recent history shows that the appearance and disappearance of common items of underwear coincides with significant economic, political, social and ideological happenings. It is this premise that provides the foundation for the exhibition *Intimitats. Roba interior del segle XIX al XXI*, created by the Badalona Museum in association with the Barcelona Provincial Council's Cultural Heritage Office. The exhibits, first unveiled at the Badalona Museum on 26 February 2015, will travel to various sites in the network of provincial museums until the end of 2017.

In the exhibition, underwear is the platform for a detailed examination of social evolution and changes in our understanding of the concept of *intimacy*, a term that has always borne a relation with *intimate* clothing. It is social convention that draws the line between public and private, that determines what we may share and exhibit without upsetting social mores and codes of civil behaviour.

From the bourgeois capitalist society of the early nineteenth century through to the present day, the six areas of the exhibition chart the events that have helped to shape our collective mentality and our views on underwear. Above all, they demonstrate how the concept of intimacy has evolved. For a lady in early nineteenth century society, secrecy and privacy began at the ankle; leaving even this part of the body exposed would have been considered immodest and

Illustration from the Spanish magazine *La Moda Elegante* (MB).

Peu: Advertisement from 1913 for the brand *Dr. Rasurel* (MB). Men's undergarments were primarily designed with protection and hygiene in mind.

caused considerable social awkwardness. This now seems disproportionate, verging on the ridiculous, and is far removed from the levels of exhibitionism that we see in the twenty-first century, when displaying parts of the body or flashes of underwear has become largely the norm. The various conceptions of intimacy and the local and social distinctions apparent at the end of the nineteenth century bear no relation whatsoever to the uniform, globalised concept that has spread through contemporary society, aided by social media. This new concept marks a substantial change in mind-set, which has narrowed the scope of what we consider intimate to such an extent that very little now remains. This begs a number of questions: What has happened over the centuries? What are the reasons behind such a radical transformation? What do we understand to be intimate?

Portrait of a woman wearing a crinoline, from the year 1868. Badalona Museum. Josep Maria Cuyàs Tolosa Archive.

The corseted intimacy of bourgeois society

Until relatively recent times, fashion — whether for outerwear or underwear — was the exclusive preserve of women, and major changes in attire were closely linked to the shifting role of women in society.

The first signs of change can be found in the late eighteenth century, at the time of the industrial revolution. The protagonists in this new model were the bourgeoisie, who had risen to prominence with the introduction of new forms of government (parliamentary democracy), new systems of production, new means of distraction and a new style of dress. A strict social etiquette emerged that dictated the appropriate behaviour and appearance for each occasion, and the moneyed classes developed a taste for changing their outfits through the course of the day (wealthy women had dresses for the home, for social calls, for afternoon strolls...) as a means of parading their prestige.

While the mentality of the new elite could be considered progressive in many respects, it was far more conservative regarding the role of women, whose activity was limited to the home. In this new society, women were solely responsible for the family's image, its aesthetic reputation, a role that had previously been shared by both sexes. Bourgeois gentlemen chose to dress comfortably and functionally — wearing long trousers, underpants and undershirts — so as not to impede their work, whereas ladies were expected

Although hoop skirts and crinolines gradually fell out of favour, at the beginning of the twentieth century ladies' underwear was still a complicated and uncomfortable affair. The photograph shows a mannequin with undershirt, corset, corset cover, pantelets and tights, from the exhibition *Intimitats. Roba interior del segle XIX al XXI* at the Badalona Museum.

Advertising for Persil detergent for tights, from the 1920s. Tights were among the items that changed most dramatically after the First World War, as skirts grew progressively shorter.

to be resplendent in luxurious and constantly varied wardrobes, condemning them to florid, uncomfortable and highly impractical attire. This was the era of hoop skirts, crinolines, bustles, petticoats and, above all, corsets, which were the cornerstone of female aesthetics throughout the nineteenth century and the early part of the twentieth. A great variety of new undergarments became available, intended to safeguard the wearer's virtue, and it was around this notion that the concept of intimacy was constructed.

The bourgeois model was notable for extending across the social strata, being based not on lineage but on individual talent and capabilities. Until this time, the manners and customs of the privileged classes had been theirs alone, imitated by those who wished to do so, but the new social norms were applicable to everyone, and imitation became a required practice.

Moving into the second half of the nineteenth century, growing industrialisation, rising production, the birth of a salaried working class and the incorporation of women into factory workforces created a new social phenomenon: mass consumption. The bourgeois lifestyle was now accessible to all, with a wide range of products available at reasonable prices from shops and department stores. The accompanying aesthetic — now well into the realms of fashion — was popularised on the pages of illustrated magazines, and everyone — particularly women — endeavoured to keep up, however uncomfortable some of the outfits turned out to be. Women who dressed practically for their jobs on the factory floor tried to maintain a more fashionable appearance in public, as can be seen in numerous portraits from the period.

Posters advertising the Kestos bra, from the 1930s. The American brand was the first to use shaped cups for support, volume and firmness.

The public intimacy of the twentieth century

Cumbersome and over-adorned undergarments fell out of favour as the static and ornamental model of femininity that they represented disappeared from society. Nevertheless, a crisis of the scale of the First World War was needed to make this change possible. With most men away at the Front, women were required to take on greater responsibilities, which saw them become a more active and more visible part of society. With these responsibilities, however, came a need for greater comfort. There was no longer any place for long skirts, nor was it feasible to wear a corset. The most basic component of a respectable lady's attire had become a hindrance, impeding movement and limiting the wearer's capacity for action. In addition, corsets were made using certain materials, such as steel, that had become vital to the war effort, and in 1917 the American government publicly called for women to stop wearing them in order to shore up the country's steel reserves. The measure was a success, enabling 28,000 tonnes of the metal to be collected for the manufacturing of armaments and munitions. The opportunity that this scenario presented — to move away from the restrictive sartorial model of the past — was seized gratefully by many.

The disappearance of the hoop skirt was much more than a change in aesthetics, it also marked a moral shift. Wearing a hoop skirt was synonymous with decency; a lady could neither dress nor undress unaided. By rejecting the hoop skirt, women regained not only their freedom of movement but also the freedom of their own bodies, and this departure from convention naturally

▶ Franco was keen to restore sewing as part of the required preparation of future housewives. Pictured is a group of girls on the way to a sewing class at Ca La Teresina, on Carrer de Cadis, Badalona, in around 1950. Badalona Museum. Image Library. L'Abans archive. Vives Ribó family collection.

▶ Illustration by Peter Criben from 1953, titled First Mate.

Gay rights demonstration in New York, 1976. Photograph: Warren K. Leffler. United States Library of Congress.

extended to underwear. For men, many more years will perhaps be needed before the foundations of the traditional male stereotype start to give way.

In later years it was largely women whose freedom would be increased or decreased by successive changes in the social, political or economic climate, causing a constant fluctuation in the control they exerted over their bodies and appearances. For example, while in the United States a new, more sensual and eroticised female image emerged, reinforced by cinema and the birth of the star system, in Spain the opposite was occurring. For some 40 years, the male-dominated and deeply conservative doctrine of the Franco regime, rooted in national Catholicism, relegated women to the home, driving them out of work, education and leisure and subjecting them to a rigid moral code that would dictate both their behaviour and their appearance. Undergarments were a clear reflection of the wearer's *milieu*, and this remains the case today, with the distinction that the new norm is absolute tolerance and permissiveness. Moral qualms have been put aside, although new factors have emerged that are more powerful and decidedly more lucrative, such as consumerism and the cult of the body beautiful.

Male mannequin at the end of the exhibition *Intimitats. Roba interior del segle XIX al XXI*. In recent years men have become more engaged with underwear, and a far wider range of items is now available, including lingerie sets, bras and bodies.

The male world, which has evolved very little in its use of underwear beyond a gradual shift towards shorter underpants and the disappearance of one-piece garments, underwent a significant transformation in the 1960s. The general air of revolt and social demands (conscientious objection, sexual freedom, etc.), fuelled particularly by the homosexual community, changed the male stereotype forever, and men began to take a more active part in the world of *intimacy*. This allowed them to escape the confines of the narrow role society had drawn for them and find a new freedom of action that was also reflected in their choice of underwear, which was no longer merely functional apparel. Men have acquired, then, the right to be different, but, like women, they remain in subjection to consumerism.

On one level, fashion is capable of transforming ideas from the street into sophisticated outfits, but it also has the power to override male reticence, as we see in the growing number of fashion devotees in this age of globalisation: men and women of all ages and backgrounds, from countries across the world, prepared to flaunt or feign intimacy to the beat of the latest trend or social media obsession. ●

The Role of Clothing in Rites of Passage

by Neus Ribas San Emeterio,
director of the Arenys de Mar Museum

Rites of Passage

Rites of passage are social practices that represent changes in social status. These changes are generally transitions from one life stage to another that are determined by social convention; a person changes his or her status in a particular place. The concept was introduced in 1909 by the French anthropologist Arnold van Gennep, who theorised on changes in the life of an individual in relation to society and the ways in which these changes, namely the transition to adulthood, marriage and death, are consecrated.[1]

Rites of passage express not only individual changes but also collective changes. Every society has elaborated ceremonies to dramatise them; in some cases the ceremonies are religious and in others they are social. Examples are the Jewish bar mitzvah and bat mitzvah; the celebrations that were held all over Spain when *quintos* — boys who had reached the age of majority — went off to do their military service; and university graduation ceremonies in the USA.

The individuals who are the focus of these ceremonies tend to dress in a particular way and their attire distinguishes them from the rest of the community. In this article we discuss the importance of clothing and the trousseau in rites of passage such as birth, the transition to adulthood, marriage and death.

1 The anthropologist Manuel Delgado reflects on rites of passage and the concept of transition in his blog: http://goo.gl/FfWDxM.

Clothing as Information

Clothing provides information and is a means of human communication. Our attire often gives away information about our status, our gender, our occupation, our likes and our dislikes. It says something of our opinions and is a means of self-assertion. In celebrating life changes in rites of passage, society has developed stereotyped dresses and trousseaus that, though they have changed over the centuries, continue to be viewed as necessary.

Traditionally, European society has linked rites of passage to religion: a christening celebrates a new addition to the community and the purification of the newborn; the First Communion signals the passage from childhood to a

Exhibition *Vestits per a l'ocasió, la indumentària en els ritus de pas* (Dressed for the Occasion: Clothing in Rites of Passage) Photograph: Txeni Gil.

wiser age; marriage brings social standing and a family; and finally, a funeral bids farewell to a member of the community. Rites of passage do not just make life changes public; they also bring recognition from the community.

Here, we analyse the role of clothing in rites of passage from the first half of the nineteenth century onwards, when industrialisation and the predominance of urban milieus over rural communities wrought changes in social customs. Industrialisation and increased population density in urban areas made clothing more uniform as it strived for a bourgeois aesthetic, while in rural societies popular clothing remained the norm until practically the first half of the twentieth century. Until the second half of the twentieth century, when mass production was not yet a fact, ceremonial costumes took on a crucial role, and women would often have a particular dress for special occasions such as weddings and christenings.

The Arenys de Mar Museum has produced an exhibition and will soon publish a catalogue on the relationship between clothing and rites of passage. The exhibition can be viewed at the Marès Museum in Arenys de Mar from 24 January to 18 December 2016.

Baptism: A Celebration of Life

In the Christian religion, the baptism ritual represents the addition of a new member of the community, the choice of a name and the child's purification. The ceremony is traditionally held soon after birth; in some communities, on the first Sunday. This celerity can be attributed to the high infant mortality rate that persisted until the mid-twentieth century. In addition to being a religious

Two women and a babe in arms on the day of the christening, at the door of a church in Vic.
Photograph: Josep Torrent i Garrigoles, taken between 1895 and 1917. Catalan Hiking Association.

celebration, a christening is also a social and family celebration that announces the arrival of a new member of the community. Until the first quarter of the twentieth century, in many towns in Spain a baptism was proclaimed with a special peal of the bells and a retinue accompanying the newborn baby from the home to the church.[2]

The newborn who was to be baptised wore a christening gown that distinguished him or her from the other members of the community. The gown is a complex garment made of soft materials such as organza, chiffon or even silk that is decorated with lace and embroidery. It was traditionally white or off-white to represent the purity and innocence of the infant and comprised the gown, a cape and a cap. It was the same for girls and boys. In many cases, it was made by the family, although sometimes it was a gift from the godmother, and it was kept from generation to generation. Wealthy and upper middle class families ordered the gowns from specialised dressmakers. The christening gown appeared in the eighteenth century, when the rite of immersing the baby in water was abandoned.

The Arenys de Mar Museum, in its collection of lace and fabrics, conserves christening gowns from the first half of the nineteenth century to the second half of the twentieth century, when the use of the garment declined with the loss of influence of the Catholic Church. In most cases, they have the features mentioned above, and several of them were produced by specialised dressmakers such as Barcelona's Casa Sivilla.[3]

First Communion: A Step into Adulthood

The First Communion is a ritual by which the child is prepared spiritually to receive the sacrament of the Eucharist, the highest expression of the Christian faith. The ceremony usually takes place when the child is about eight years old. Until the first half of the twentieth century, the ceremony represented, from social and anthropological perspectives, the transition from childhood to adulthood. In a society in which children were not fully schooled and many of them entered the workforce very early, the First Communion represented this transition from one stage to the next.

The dress that symbolises the transition to adulthood is elaborated upon during the twentieth century and particularly from the 1920s onwards. Boys tended to wear a suit and tie, a military uniform or a sailor suit, leaving the short trousers of childhood behind. Girls dressed as brides-to-be, in long white dresses and veils. Social changes in the 1960s led to other, simpler kinds of christening garments, although white continued to be the norm for girls. The tradition of dressing children taking the First Communion in white and as

2 Another of the traditions linked to christenings that referred to the baby's health was to give out sweets to children. The godparents threw sweets up in the air during the baptismal procession. The book *El veïnat de la meva infantesa. Records d'en Manel Sunyer Mas*, published by the Viladecans City Council, recalls a popular song sung to mark the occasion: "*Tireu confits que no són podrits; tireu avellanes que no són corcades; si no en voleu tirar, el nen es morirà!*" [Throw sweets that aren't rotten; throw hazelnuts that aren't spoiled. If you don't, the baby will die!].

3 Casa Sivilla was a lingerie outlet and workshop founded in 1898 by Concepció Carresi Verdaguer, Sivilla's widow, who was of Italian origin. It became very popular among the Catalan middle class in the twentieth century.

Nineteenth century wedding in Sant Pere de Terrassa. Author unknown, 6 June 1930. B. Ragón Collection, Municipal Archive of the Terrassa City Council.

adults still stands today, although in the case of girls the veil is no longer worn.

First Communion dress included several other elements, some of them religious and others that were part of the trousseau: a rosary, the missal or prayer book, keepsakes and so on. With reference to fabrics, many girls carried a communion bag that was also white or ecru and made of natural materials. In some cases, it was embroidered, like Clotilde Pascual's bag,[4] which she may have embroidered herself with the words *Recuerdo de la Primera Comunión* (Keepsake of the First Communion), from 1905.

Marriage: A Change in Family Status

The wedding ceremony was traditionally the end to a process of courtship, engagement and financial negotiations between the two families. Throughout history, especially among wealthy families and the nobility, marriages were a way of making pacts and forging alliances, whether economic or political in nature. For the bride the process was expressed symbolically in items of furniture; she brought to the marriage a bridal chest[5] containing a domestic trousseau of bed linen, household goods and lingerie that she had collected over time.

The image of the betrothed in the community is still of great importance. They choose special garments for a civilian or religious rite that involves a life change. The garments chosen communicate the new situation to others and have evolved over the centuries in keeping with customs, fashion, economic and social changes, religious tradition and so on. The use of white as the favoured colour for wedding dresses seems to have its origins in the white Honiton lace dress worn by Queen Victoria (1819-1901) when she married Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, in 1840 — a break from the silver and white dress that was the tradition.

4 Clotilde Pascual (1894-1969) was a lacemaker and embroiderer known for her needlework and her reproductions of antique models, which are held by the Decorative Arts Museum and private collectors such as Josep Pascó. The Arenys de Mar Museum preserves the collection of lace and embroidery donated by her family.

5 The bridal chests are one of the most unique types of Catalan furniture and date back to the fifteenth century. They were used to transport, store and display the trousseau.

Mourning dress for a christening, Arenys de Mar Museum (see detail). Photograph: Irene Masriera.

From that moment on, white weddings became popular among the urban classes and brides invariably chose white for their wedding dress. In Spain, until the first half of the twentieth century, among the working classes and the rural bourgeoisie brides wore a black wedding dress and a white veil or black shawl (*mantilla*) covering the head. From the mid-twentieth century onwards, the popularity of the wedding ceremonies of European royalty and nobility led to the establishment of white as the colour of the bridal dress. Wedding dresses followed fashion in a wider sense, though some of their features are still unmistakeable. White as the basic colour, natural materials such as silk and organza, tulle veils and a proliferation of lace and embroidery are some of these unchanging features.

In rural areas, until the first quarter of the twentieth century, those entering into the contract of marriage wore traditional dress on this significant date. In the Catalan tradition, the bride wore traditional dress composed of a doublet, a silk skirt embroidered with flowers, mittens, a silk and lace apron, a handkerchief worn across the chest and a white *mantilla* worn on the head. The latter was the identifying mark of the bride. Informally referred to as *peix* (fish), it was rectangular in shape with rounded ends and was usually embroidered. Sewn to this piece were the large lace ruffles that fell about the head and shoulders of the bride. Salvador Vilarrasa i Vall, in his book *La vida a pagès*, describes the ritual wedding between the *hereu* (traditionally, an heir) and the *pubilla* (traditionally, an heiress): "*la núvia puja a la rectoria per posar-se el vestit de casar i la mantellina i quan està ben arreglada, baixen amb sa mare i germana a l'església*" [the bride goes up to the rectory to put on her wedding dress and shawl, and when she is so arranged she walks down with her mother and sister to church]. Among the wedding *mantillas* kept at the Arenys de Mar Museum there is one worn by Ramona Puigdollers Castells, a *pubilla* from Vic, who had inherited it from her mother and wore it at her wedding to Josep Verdaguer i Callís, a cousin of the priest Cinto Verdaguer, in Vic, in 1855. It is an exceptional piece of ecru hand-embroidered silk tipped with Lille bobbin lace.

During the second half of the nineteenth century and until the end of the First World War, at middle-class weddings the bride's trousseau was completed with other elements such as the wedding fan and the ceremonial handkerchief. Fans, often a gift from the groom made of bobbin lace or needlework, were painstakingly handcrafted by artisans and thus showed the family's wealth. During the first quarter of the twentieth century the wealth of a bridal trousseau could be measured by the amount of lace on the different pieces that made up the wedding dress, all of which were romantic and traditional in their design and bore motifs that referred to marriage.[6]

6 These motifs or symbols on fans include love scenes, mythological scenes alluding to love, rose bouquets, flower garlands, bows, the couple's initials and so on.

Wedding dress, 1920s. Carmen Viñas-L'Arca de l'Àvia Collection (see detail). Photograph: Irene Masriera.

Along with the fan, another important element was the white ceremonial handkerchief embroidered with the bride's initials. In Catalan society there were several models of ceremonial handkerchief made of Arenys lace[7] with floral designs. The Arenys de Mar Museum lent the exhibition at the Catalan History Museum *Do I Love You? A History of Love and Marriage* a ceremonial lace handkerchief with the same lace design found at the Lázaro Galdiano Foundation in Madrid and in collections belonging to private collectors who have been able to confirm that it is a wedding handkerchief.

Among the urban classes, the wedding veil is an important complement to the wedding dress. Its origin seems to date back to the Roman Empire.[8] In the first quarter of the nineteenth century, the veil was relatively small and brides would often wear it over their shoulders. Handmade lace veils were very expensive and few could afford them, but the introduction of machine-woven tulle in the first half of the nineteenth century lowered costs and the use of the veil spread. From the 1920s onwards, veils became longer.[9]

Death: The Final Journey

Bidding goodbye to a member of the community is a social event. In pre-industrial societies the ritual of burial involved the entire community or village. Before the nineteenth century, the body was accompanied by a cortege carrying torches, the number of which reflected the deceased's wealth. With industrialisation, the ceremonies gradually became more focused on the family, who held a vigil the night before the funeral.

Until the second half of the twentieth century, when a person died the immediate family displayed their grief by wearing black. Tradition dictated a specific period of mourning; in some areas of Andalusia this could be eight years for members of the immediate family. In a man's case, mourning was expressed by wearing black for the first year and dark colours thereafter. His dress was distinguished by features such as a black ribbon on his hat and a black armband around the left sleeve of his jacket. A woman wore a long veil over her hat, hiding her face; this kind of veil was later replaced by a black gauze veil that was placed directly over the head. During religious ceremonies, everyone wore black or dark colours and women wore a veil or a *mantilla* over their heads.

The entire family wore mourning dress, including the children; nonetheless, the mourning christening dress embroidered with the number 613 that is preserved at the Arenys de Mar Museum is striking. It belonged to Francesc Sarrais Serra, who was born circa 1850 in Berga and who had lost his father before he was born. The family made a mourning dress lined with ecru silk and black silk lace around the hem.

7 Arenys lace (*ret fi*) was the white lace made on the Maresme coast north of Barcelona. It was made of cotton or linen and included handmade point ground lace.
8 The catalogue *Blanca y radiante* (White and Radiant) describes the symbolism of wedding accessories such as the veil, which represents the desire for a new life and is a reminder of the *flammeum*, a Roman veil that symbolised the virginity of the bride and protection from evil spirits.
9 In the first half of the nineteenth century, brides wore a veil or a hat that was sometimes covered with a veil. From the early twentieth century onwards, veils and long trains became common.

Conclusion: Clothing Continues to Mark Special Occasions

Despite changes in society, rite of passage celebrations continue to be an essential part of a person's life cycle and clothing makes clear his or her change in status. Social changes and the decline in religion as a central part of rite of passage celebrations has not led to their disappearance. The businesses devoted to ceremonies such as first communions and weddings are an ongoing testament to the importance given by families and society to rites of passage.

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OPEN SOURCE LANGUAGE VERSION > ESPAÑOL

The rise of Ansotana wool

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At the heart of the Aragonese Pyrenees, in the valleys of Ansó and Hecho, we find the origins of the Ansotana sheep.

In the Middle Ages, wool was a natural part of people's lives, the staple material of their everyday clothing, and the traditional dress from that period is now the focus of a nationally renowned cultural event, which takes place on the last Sunday in August.

The popularity of Ansotana wool has grown in parallel with increased collaboration between private stakeholders and social organisations in the rural areas of the Pyrenees where the breed is kept. Building on the enthusiasm of breeders — represented by the regional association ACOAN — to harness the value of the wool from their flocks, guidance was sought from government specialists for the *comarca* of Jacetania, and with support received from the Leader initiative of the ADECUARA regional rural development programme.

This energetic local dynamic has been accompanied since the outset by broader international development, reflecting the intrinsic importance of cross-border relationships established with various associations in the French Pyrenees, Catalonia and the rest of Europe, particularly through the European Association for Study, Liaison, Innovation and Research into Textiles, ATELIER European Wool.

Since 2010, Ansotana wool has formed part of the European exhibition 'Wools of Europe/Laines d'Europe', which was opened in Paris and is currently based in Biella (Italy).

Funding from the Leader initiative, complemented by the expert advice of regional authorities, led to the creation of a research and development programme to explore the possibilities of this unique wool.

The production and commercialisation of Ansotana wool was the subject of a 2010 study by Julia Gladiné, carried out as part of her work placement for a master's degree in Protected Natural Spaces. Among her key findings was the minimal value placed on this type of wool at the time of the study.

To look at the issue empirically, 90 kilograms of Ansotana wool were sent to the French Pyrenees to be cleaned and spun by one of the few family-run business still operating in the region. This was the first time that Ansotana wool

Photograph by Ricardo Compairé Escartin. Photographic Archive, Huesca Provincial Council.

had been machine-spun, and the resulting yarn was put through a series of tests, coloured with natural dyes and hand-woven into shawls. The inconsistent results of the washing and the varying properties of the finished yarn, however, suggested that an initial selection at source was required.

In parallel to the technical processes involved in this transformation, the commercialisation of Ansotana wool has gradually found an outlet in forums for local development. The first of these, in Bagnères de Bigorre (France) in 2011, was the first trans-Pyrenean and cross-border forum between wool professionals and marked the start of a close relationship with regional associations in the French Pyrenees involved in the commercial development of native sheep breeds.

Since 2011, Ansotana wool has become a permanent feature of regional events:

- At the stand set up by ACOAN, the association of Ansotana breeders, at the principal regional livestock fair.
- In practical courses for the creation of wool felt, with women from local rural communities and staff of the ATADES holiday centre for people with disabilities, in Martillué (Jaca).

Through these and other events, Ansotana wool has become an intrinsic part of the local identity in Los Valles Occidentales (the westernmost area of the Aragonese Pyrenees) and is marketed alongside other designated tourism products registered in the protected natural area, an initiative that has been incorporated into the provisions of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protect Arts pertaining specifically to the Valles Occidentales Natural Park.

In 2012, the cooperative framework established with associations in the Pyrenees won the Working Community of the Pyrenees (CTP) award for French-Spanish cooperation in the Pyrenees region.

Having achieved these initial results with the first “public presentation” of Ansotana wool, ACOAN members aimed to develop the product further, and

Blue woollen shawl displayed at the 'Wools of Europe' exhibition.

Yarn and batting from Ansotana wool, displayed at the Expoforga fair on 4-5 May 2011.

Presentation of items made during the practical course on felts at the PIR festival of cultures, Ansó, 2-3 July 2011

a competitive selection-at-source programme was trialled during the 2013 shearing season with a view to improving the qualities of the yarn obtained.

Part of the 400 kilograms of selected wool were processed in 2014, some spun into yarn and the rest made into batting. Clear improvements were seen in the quality of the final yarn, with a markedly softer and gentler feel obtained.

The batting was used for a new series of practical training courses with felts over the course of 2015, again for ATADES staff, who continue to organise workshops that have proved immensely popular with the centre's users and with young monitors involved in social leisure programmes and training workshops (including the *Trastolillo* craft events, organised in villages throughout Jacetania by the regional Department for Youth Affairs).

Ansotana wool has acquired a consolidated social value, becoming part of the cultural identity of the region, for all that it is under-used as a resource in its own right. Alongside this cultural significance, however, there is a desire among producers to harness the wool's potential as part of a broader portfolio of extensive ovine exploitation across the whole of the Pyrenees.

The ACOAN website showcases the results of part of this process: balls and skeins of wool carrying the logo that certifies them as 100% local-breed products.

Ansotana wool yard is being sold provisionally in Ansó, with considerable success, and thanks to the spirit of cooperation that exists between businesses in the region it has also been sold in the Catalan Pyrenees, raising sufficient interest to feature in an article in Vogue in January 2015.

The following grade of Ansotana wool is used for the manufacturing of 100% Pyrenean wool jackets: wool sheared in Ansó, washed in Niaux (Ariège, France), spun in Montagut (Girona) and knitted and sewn in Olot (Girona).

At present, the market for Ansotana wool is still awakening. The future of ACOAN-produced wool will be tied to efforts to promote the 100% local brand, linked to an extensive existing system of quality Pyrenean meat production whose successful sale to end customers attests to the effective construction of regional relationships over the last few years. ●

Library novelties and news

OPEN SOURCE LANGUAGE VERSION > CATALÀ

Diccionari tèxtil llaner. Referències il·lustrades
[Wool textile dictionary. Illustrated references]

Sabadell History Museum.
ISBN 978-84-87221-29-3

■ **Roser Enrich Gregori**

This book illustrates the results that can be achieved when a museum — in this case the Sabadell History Museum — establishes collaborative ties with civil society, with the agents who have played a direct role in the very historical processes that its exhibits reflect. Since 2004, the Museum has worked with a *grup de teòrics*, a group of former wool industry professionals from Sabadell with specific expertise in textile theory and techniques. Their involvement in the sector makes them the ideal witnesses to the city's primary economic activity: the manufacturing of wool fabrics, which has been at the heart of life in Sabadell for more than 150 years.

In order transmit its knowledge to the uninitiated, and to leave a legacy for the coming generations, the group of experts decided to compile a dictionary of *living samples*, in which descriptions of hundreds of fabric samples are displayed alongside the corresponding images. This initial idea became the Diccionari tèxtil llaner [Wool textile dictionary], whose two volumes — on *llaneria* (woollen goods, for ladies' clothing) and on *panyeria* (drapery, for men's clothing) — bring together and document the many fabrics present in the sample books conserved at the Sabadell History Museum, all of them produced by companies in the city and independently catalogued by the group of industry experts.

The book we are concerned with here, *Diccionari tèxtil llaner. Referències il·lustrades* [Wool textile dictionary. Illustrated references], reissues the two volumes in a single publication.

The book starts by describing the central role of the wool textile industry in the history of

Sabadell, from the mid-nineteenth century to the last decades of the twentieth century. We are told how important the sample books were for gaining a competitive edge over rival firms, hence the great care that was taken to preserve and document them correctly. The authors refer to the extensive collection of textile sample books from local manufacturers — more than 4,000 volumes — that are conserved at the Museum, and mention the efforts to catalogue this

enormous selection of textiles that have been in progress since 2004, led by the group of experts. We then learn about the motivations for creating the dictionary and the groundwork that had to be done to discuss and agree on a series of coherent terms to be used in the cataloguing process. Finally, the authors chart the various factors that have a bearing on the name given to each woollen fabric.

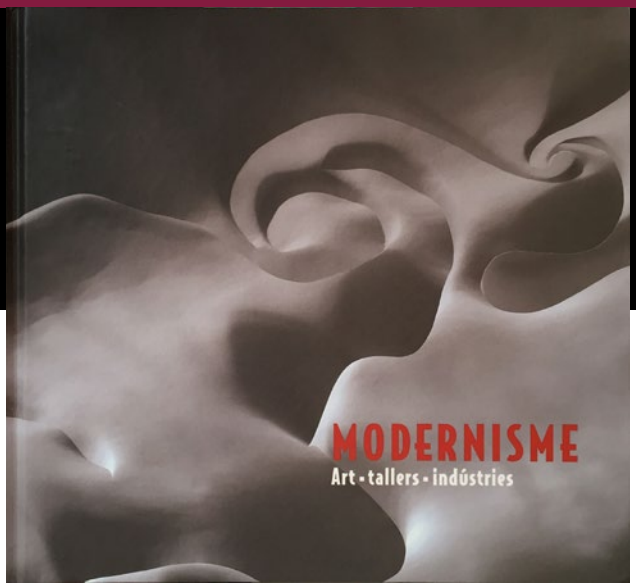
The book reproduces in its exact form the original dictionary compiled by the group of experts: the first page contains drawings of the three basic weaves — plain, twill and satin — and is followed by the photographs of 225 samples, each displayed next to the name of the fabric and a close-up image that allows readers to appreciate the finer detail of the weave. The final section is an index of the samples.

The initiative launched by the Sabadell History Museum, to publish this dictionary of *living samples*, gives enthusiasts and specialists a work of reference of unique characteristics, without which the knowledge of its content would be restricted to the confines of the Museum itself. ■

Library novelties and news

OPEN SOURCE LANGUAGE VERSION > CATALÀ

Modernisme
Art-workshops-industries



■ **Neus Ribas**

On 7 October 2015 the exhibition '*Modernisme*. Art-workshop-industries' opened at the Fundació Catalunya-La Pedrera. Curated by Mireia Freixa, the exhibition reinterprets Catalan *modernisme* as a phenomenon that reached outside the disciplinary boundaries of art history, considering it in the context of the work carried out by a wealth of workshops, industries and artisans who produced many of the decorative items and materials that adorned the homes of the Catalan bourgeoisie at the turn of the twentieth century.

The catalogue combines articles on general aspects of *modernisme*, written by experts like Mireia Freixa, Pilar Vélez and Teresa-M. Sala, with more specific pieces on the various decorative materials represented in the exhibition: glass, ceramics, wood, iron and, of course, textiles.

The article by Laura Casal-Valls, *Modernisme i modernismes en les arts de l'agulla*, focuses on the renewal that *modernisme* brought to home furnishings and fashion, particularly for women. Like other currents that influenced the decorative arts, *modernisme* imposed a new aesthetic language that was reflected in the domestic environment, and sheets, table cloths, blinds, curtains and any number of other items were designed to match the new furniture of the period's bourgeois homes. This required considerable skill, and *Casa Castells*, in Arenys de Mar, is a particularly good example of a workshop dedicated to the hand-crafting of lace for home decoration.

In the world of fashion, prestigious *couturières* such as Joana Valls, Maria Molist and Madame Renaud, whose creations were intended for the wealthy Catalan elite, were met with new stores like *El Siglo*, *El Barato* or *El Águila* that brought about a democratisation of the sector, making fashion accessible to the middle classes. The work of the era's great designers could rightly be considered artistic, creating clothes that were truly unique, such as the examples in the catalogue of the Poiret-style dress and coat, both by Renaud & Cie, which are conserved at the CDMT in Terrassa. ■

Library novelties and news

OPEN SOURCE LANGUAGE VERSION > CATALÀ

Impressions du Soleil Levant. 150 ans de relations Alsace-Japon

Exhibition catalogue
Musée de l'Impression sur Étoffes de Mulhouse

ISBN: 978-2-36701-047-2

■ **Assumpta Dangla**

The catalogue commemorates the 150th anniversary of the formal establishment of friendly relations between Japan and Alsace, one of the first regions in Europe to engage directly with Japan in the second half of the nineteenth century. As early as 1863 merchants from Osaka had made their first commercial forays into Europe with a view to establishing a manufacturing base for the Japanese market, which demanded the most advanced techniques of the time. The products were, above all, woollen muslins for kimonos and winter-weight dresses, and the new relationship would last for many years, leaving a profound impression on the European economy and the arts in general. The catalogue presents the earliest Alsatian textiles that introduced a European public to the world of Japanese decorative forms, novel designs that played a role in the birth of both Impressionism and Modernism.

The catalogue is primarily didactic, presenting a carefully chosen selection of pieces from the museum's permanent collections, the Societé Industrielle de Mulhouse, the Cabinet des Estampes et des Dessins (Strasbourg), the Musée Unterlinden and the Bibliothèque Humaniste de Colmar, and from a variety of other institutions and private collectors. These are structured in three blocks. The catalogue opens with an overview of the European taste for exoticism and Japanism, describing the influence of private collections of paintings and decorative arts that were put together in the era. It continues with a study of the Japanese influence on Alsatian printed fabrics, and the first iconographic decorative themes: naturalism, characteristic Japanising motifs (geishas, samurais, *cloissonnés*, etc.) and minimalism. It is interesting to see how Alsatian designers, particularly in Mulhouse, 'translated' the Japanese artistic language for European tastes, producing fabrics of a particular visual richness. There is also a marked minimalist current running through the work, giving it a distinctly modern feel. In the third section, we find the many and diverse sources of inspiration for these novel textiles, chiefly magazines and books on the decorative arts devoted to the Japanese style.

Moving away from the formal aspects of the exhibition, the catalogue concludes with a reflection on the influence that Alsace and Japan had on one another, looking at the fabrics produced in France, the flourishing of the export market, and the competition brought by the new textile industry in Japan and the impact it had in the West. The team of the Musée de l'Impression sur Étoffes has painted a broad picture of this long-standing, intensely productive and mutually beneficial relationship between Japan and Alsace. Though concise, the catalogue contains a wealth of notes that bring the reader closer to fabrics that marked a new trend in European textiles and whose influence is still evident in art today, with a language that continues to speak through contemporary design. ■

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Summary Datatèxtil 35

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